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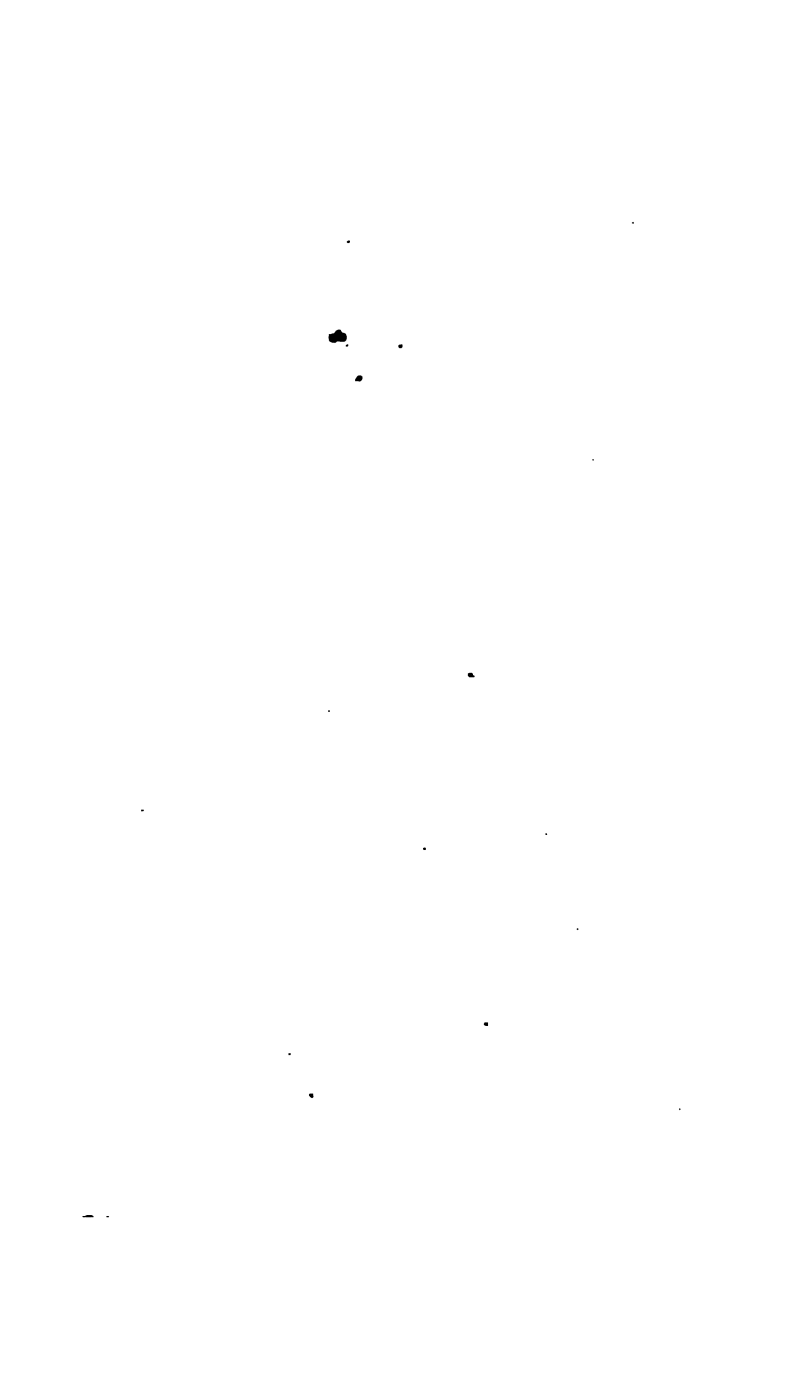
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POISONERS AND PROPAGANDISTS;

OR,

A DEVELOPED AGE.

A Tale,

IN TWO VOLS.

Can such things be,
And overcome us, like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder?

SHAKESPEARE.



LONDON:

CHARLES WESTERTON,

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ERRATA.

For scéance read séance. For Fronde read Froude.

PREFACE.

THE gifted Advocate of the Slave—the deservedly popular author of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin”—has truly remarked, in her “Sunny Memories,” that “a work of Fiction in our day, enlisting the sympathies of all classes, is becoming a very great agency;” and that “the power of *fictitious* writing, for good or for evil, is a thing which ought most seriously to be reflected on.”

Entirely coinciding in this opinion, and strongly impressed, as I am, in common with the masses of my countrymen and women, that the vital interests of this great, free, and Protestant land, are imperilled by the stealthy, yet palpable advances, of a vast organised and deadly Propaganda, stalking undisturbed amongst us, steadily and succesfully carrying out its mission—the subversion of Gospel Truth—and the consequent enslavement of mankind, beneath the yoke of Papal tyranny, I am tempted to wield, though it may be with a feeble hand, this powerful lever

of our Times, and have ventured to *Improviso* characters, in order to illustrate FACTS, *patent* though they may be to every reflecting mind, that takes note of daily occurrences passing around our own fire sides; painfully stereotyped as they are, in many a social circle, broken up, and broken hearted, by the perversion of some beloved member, whose apostacy from the glorious doctrines of the Reformation, is shrouded in a mysticism, that excites in the minds of some, harrassing doubts, as to the truth of all revelation; while others, lost in amazement and dismay, at the lapse into sensuous superstition of cherished friends, and cultivated associates, pronounce as unaccountable, the Enigma that might readily be solved, had they investigated the powerful and unscrupulous means employed to swell the ranks of a domineering Church, by an insidious and never slumbering Jesuit Propaganda.

To unmask these means, and exhibit the *Tools* these spiritual Moles work with, undermining the fundamental principles of Bible Christianity, and to expose the mystified jargon by which they enlist the sympathies of æsthetic taste and love of art, in many a noble unsuspecting mind, causing such to succumb beneath the imposing and artistic worship of an idolatrous faith, has been the object

of a Tale, in each incident of which a counterpart may be found authenticated in the page of History, or verified by the testimony of credible living witnesses, as well as fully borne out by the "Secret Oath," and "Secret Instructions," of the Jesuit Order, found in several of their Colleges, when they were forcibly expelled, and attached in manuscript to a work of theirs, published in Venice, in 1596, now in the Library of the British Museum. The "Secret Oath," sworn to by every disciple of Loyola, I leave to speak for itself, and shall merely transcribe it *verbatim*.

THE OATH, OR SECRET OF THE JESUITS.

I, A. B., now in the presence of Almighty God, the blessed Virgin Mary, the blessed Michael, the Archangel, the blessed St. John the Baptist, the holy Apostle St. Peter, and St. Paul, and the Saints, and sacred host of Heaven, and to you, my ghostly Father, do declare, from my heart, without mental reservation, that his Holiness Pope Urban, is Christ's Vicar-General, and is the true and only head of the Catholic, or Universal Church throughout the earth; and that, by virtue of the keys of binding and loosing, given to his Holiness by My Saviour Jesus Christ, he hath power to depose heretical kings, princes, states,

commonwealths, and governments, all being illegal without his sacred confirmation, and that they may be safely destroyed; therefore, to the utmost of my power, I shall, and will, defend this doctrine, and his Holiness' rights and customs, against all usurpers of the heretical (or Protestant) authority whatsoever, especially against the now pretended authority, and Church of England, and all adherents, in regard that they and she be usurpal and heretical, opposing the sacred Mother Church of Rome.

I do renounce and disown any allegiance is due to any heretical king, prince, or state, named Protestants, or obedience to any of their inferior magistrates or officers. I do further declare that the doctrine of the Church of England, of the Calvinists, Huguenots, and of other of the name of Protestants to be damnable, and they themselves are damned, and to be damned, that will not forsake the same.

I do further declare, that I will help, assist, and advise all, or any of his Holiness's agents, in any place wherever I shall be, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, or in any other territory or kingdom I shall come to, and do my utmost to extirpate the heretical Protestant doctrine, and to destroy all their pretended powers, regal or otherwise.

I do further promise and declare, that I am dispensed with to assume any religion heretical, for the propagation of Mother Church's interests, to keep secret and private all her agent's counsels, from time to time, as they intrust me; and not to divulge, directly or indirectly, by word, writing, or circumstance whatsoever; but to execute all that shall be proposed, given in charge, or discovered unto me by you my ghostly father, or any of this sacred Convent. All which I, A. B., do swear by the blessed Trinity, and blessed Sacrament, which I am now to receive, to perform, and on my part, to keep inviolable; and do call all the heavenly, and glorious host of Heaven, to witness these my real intentions to keep this my Oath. In testimony hereof, I take this most holy and blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, and witness the same further, with my own hand and seal, in the face of this holy Convent, this day of
An. Dom.

The secret instructions, "*Monita Secreta*," are more diffuse, and yet sufficiently special, to fully instruct and direct this Machieval Order, how to subjugate mankind; they embrace 17 Chapters of considerable length, and embody in themselves a perfect Ultramontane Encyclopedia, and may be

had in the original Latin, at Seely's, London, and were found in the Jesuit College of Paderhorn, in Westphalia, when Christian, Duke of Brunswick, took possession.

The Preface opens with a lengthy exhortation to the Jesuit Order to preserve a Carthusian silence respecting the existence of the "Secret Oath," and "Secret Instructions," strictly admonishing the Members to take the greatest care to prevent their falling into the hands of strangers, and if unhappily they should, to deny them altogether ; and confirm this by the testimony of Members ignorant of the reserved secrets of the "*Monita Secreta*."

The 1st Chapter commences with a characteristic piece of advice, and runs thus —

"In order to render Members pleasing to the inhabitants of the place, they are to explain that the object of the Society is, to apply its efforts as much for the good of others, as for themselves, therefore, they must undertake the humblest offices in the hospitals, visit the sick, afflicted, and prisoners, and hear Confessions promptly and indiscriminately, in order that the most influential inhabitants of the place may admire them, because of the extraordinary charity they bear to all."

"The Members are also to go to places at a

distance, where they are to accept even the smallest contributions, and afterwards to give to the poor, in order to edify those who are not yet acquainted with the Society, and make them more liberal to us."

"The Members must use every effort to gain the ear and good will of Princes and high personages, in order to make them subservient to our purposes."

"The Members, to render themselves masters of the minds of Princes, must dexterously insinuate themselves into the good graces of those who are high in office—to conduct honorable embassies at foreign Courts, and especially at the Vatican, by which means they can recommend themselves, and the Society. Those most zealous, and best versed in our laws, must be appointed to this office."

"The Members are, above all, to win over the favourites and domestics of Princes, and Nobles, by little presents, and various offices of piety, in order, through them, we may become acquainted with their tempers and habits, and the more easily accommodate ourselves to them."

"Princesses and Ladies of title are easily gained over, through their Ladies of the Bed-chamber; wherefore, let great attention be paid

to all such, for through them the whole secrets of each family will be disclosed to us."

"The Public must be invited to attend sermons and fellowships—hear orations and declamations—be complimented with verses and themes, attracting them in every possible way, and, if necessary, give them entertainments."

"Should there be any one in the service of the King, Prince, or Noble, who dislikes our Society, every effort must be made to win him over, even by promises of favor and preferment."

"Those high in office must be approached with great caution, and be won over to act for us; and we must make use of their authority in obtaining situations, to be filled by our Members, and in secretly using their names in the acquisition of temporal things."

"The Members must make it appear to Princes and Noblemen, that they have nothing else in view but God's glory; and in directing their consciences, they will advise no austerity but what they find them willing to comply with, remembering that their object must be, not *direct*, but *insensible* advances towards secular dominion."

"Let Professors and Preachers be furnished by our Members, with a list of suitable persons friendly to us, and especially those liberal to the

Society, that when opportunity offers they may dexterously get them in."

"Immediately upon the death of an official person, let Members take care to have a friend to the Society named to fill the place, avoiding the slightest suspicion of being thought to interfere with the prerogative of the Prince; but this, as I said before, had better be done by some powerful friend, who will sustain any hatred that may arise."

"Our Members must oppose, with all their might, those who want to establish Schools for the instruction of youth, where we have advantageously commenced; and they must represent to Princes and Magistrates their being allowed or encouraged to do so, will tend to disorder and tumult, for that disturbance must result from different modes of education."

"In the meantime, Members must take care to give rewards for learning and virtue, publicly examining the scholars in their studies, to secure the applause of the magistrates, and most influential people."

The sixth chapter is specially devoted to the instruction of Members, how to gain over rich Widows, or Ladies whose fortune is at their own disposal; and Members are exhorted "to provide

such with Confessors, who must encourage them to remain in a state of widowhood, or single life, for by so pious an intention they will merit an eternal reward, and effectually escape the pains of Purgatory."

"Members must also persuade those Ladies to fit up a Chapel, or Oratory, in their own house, as the proper place for meditation and spiritual exercises; the Confessor must take care to celebrate Mass, and give occasional lectures, in order to keep them under."

"One principal point will be, to remove (little by little) such servants as have not an understanding with our Society, and to get in others, recommended by persons depending on us; for by these means we shall have *intimate knowledge of all that passes in the family*; but changes must cautiously be made in the establishment, having due regard to the circumstances of the person, and the temperament of the mind on religious matters."

"Let those Ladies be urged to the frequent use of Sacraments, particularly that of penance, because there she frequently discloses her secret thoughts and temptations. She must be invited to go to hear her Confessor, under promise of special prayer for herself; and let her recite Litanies, and examine her conscience daily."

“ Some Ladies require to be frequently visited and entertained, and with such, care must be taken not to exercise too much rigour in confession, for fear of annoying them, when there may be danger of not regaining their favor, and they fall into the hands of others; but in all this, much judgment must be used, knowing the general inconstancy of women.”

“ The Members must endeavour to have suitable young Ladies, of noble birth, placed with Widows and others under our control. A *Governess* must be chosen by the Confessor for them, who is to endeavour to bring them into *submission* to the *customs and rules of the Society*.”

“ The Confessors must not neglect to find out from their penitents who their parents, relations, and friends are—their estates, reversions, and intentions—which they must aim at moulding in favor of the Society; and if there is prospect of success, let the Confessor, for the better clearing of the conscience, strictly enjoin constant confession, in order to find out from many answers, more than could be done at one time. If it is a female, he must keep up the confessions, and constant attendance at Church; and if a male, let him frequent the Society, and become intimate with our Members.”

“Speak on religion as if by inspiration; tell them the heinous sin it is to resist the heavenly calling, and lastly, engage them in spiritual exercises, to determine them to become members of our Order.”

“The whole of the Society’s success depends upon our Members gaining the good will of all, by accommodating themselves to the inclination of each; and, to do this the more effectually, let the Provincial send a number of Members into those places inhabited by the noble, and wealthy.”

In subjoining the above extracts from the Jesuit “*Monita Secreta*,” I leave gentle readers to draw their own inference, and judge whether the *tone* of my sketch is an over coloured portraiture of POISONERS and PROPAGANDISTS.

Amplly shall I feel myself repaid, should this humble effort be blessed in arresting even one wavering spirit from plunging into the abyss of *mediæval* darkness, sure to engulf its victim in irrational mysticism, and succeed in impressing his, or her, soul, with the serious conviction, of the inestimable blessings of a scriptural and reformed faith.

THE AUTHOR.

London, Nov. 5th, 1856.

POISONERS AND PROPAGANDISTS;

OR,

A DEVELOPED AGE.

CHAPTER I.

Thou, whose pitying heart
Yearned for the countless miseries of those
Whom thou didst die to save, touch thou our souls
With the same spirit of untiring love.
Divine Redeemer ! may our fellow men,
Howe'er by rank or circumstances disjoined,
Be as a Brother, in his hour of need.

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

IT was a *gala* day, in Fosterton Park, the sun shone out brightly, and cheerily, the time-worn and sturdy old Oaks, on its Terraces, as well as the graceful and yielding Birch, reflected back his beams from a world of Summer leaves, bright—verdant—and young—as if *Improvisod* for the general holiday, while the lofty Chestnuts, with their Pyramid of Hyacinthine flowers, offered cool, and delicious bowers, to many a joyous group, who sought their fragrant shade, in preference to the aged and sepulchral Yew, whose vaulted recesses, impervious as they were to that Summer Sun's fiercest rays, tempted not the young and happy spirits around beneath its cloistered shadow. Yet that old Yew tree was not entirely deserted ; on the rustic bench, half hid amongst its gnarled and drooping branches, sat, or rather reclined, listlessly, a man, who had passed life's summer, yet retained, in a remarkable degree, in that vehicle of the soul, the eye, the full vigour, and energy, of early manhood. Any country, from India to the Pole, might have claimed him for her son ; the thin, scattered locks that shaded his massive brow, were of that light, sandy hue,

we identify with a northern origin, harmonising with the bluish grey tint of his low set, but at times singularly expressive eye ; while a complexion of the deepest olive bespoke him a sojourner, if not an *aborigine* of some region, not far removed from the Equator. His dress was that of an Ecclesiastic, of the Church of Rome, as worn in Protestant lands, yet devoid of any pretension, in no ordinary degree ; there was no affected severity about it, nor was there anything to indicate careless neglect ; it was polished, shining, and sleek—as the manners of the wearer, calculated to excite neither surprise or remark. He held a Latin Breviary in his hand ; but those energetic, vigorous eyes of his, were stealthily, but steadily, fixed on the gay, fashionable group, that surrounded Mr. and Mrs. Fosterton, as they issued from their Mansion, and moved along the noble Terrace in front, to receive the deafening cheer of welcome, from their grateful, substantial-looking Tenantry, who presented, on this occasion, many hundreds of well-dressed, comfortable Farmers, with their Wives, Sons, and Daughters, marshalled on the smooth green sward, that lay between the Terrace and the Lake, by that indefatigable little man, “Mat Casey,” the hereditary Steward on the Fosterton Estate, since his ancestor served the first of that name, some centuries before.

It was a pleasant picture to look at, a large landed Proprietor—young, rich, and handsome—with his beautiful attractive Wife beside him, their two noble Boys, and fairy-like only Daughter, gambolling around, with troops of *distingué* friends to assist in entertaining (a rare sight in Ireland) a contented, and comfortable-looking Tenantry, bearing the unmistakeable impress of sturdy, honest independence, not only in “the outward man,” but that true independence of mind, generated by free access to the Fountain of Divine Truth—the word of the living God, that for centuries had circulated in free course amongst them, since the days of the worthy Bishop who became a purchaser of miles around, in the latter part of the 16th century, and had planted his

estate with a Band of Bible Christians, who handed down to their children's children habits of order, industry, and thrift, associated, and preserved, with the unmutilated word of Him, who promised, not in vain, to His believing people, "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" and this precious blessing was not withdrawn from the Fosterton Tenantry, for they presented an *oasis* of prosperity, and wordly comfort, as well as of moral rectitude, a strange contrast to the misery and crime, that prevailed so lamentably amongst their class, on estates equally as well circumstanced in the country around.

On the present occasion, their young Landlord entertained them, because he had been lately a guest at such rustic festivities, among some of his English friends, whose opinions he respected, and who had accompanied him in his present visit to Ireland; and he felt a pardonable pride in displaying as his own Tenantry, a body, that would not suffer by comparison with the best cared for, and most highly prized, amongst their class in merry England:—besides, the entertainment was meant as a social Holocaust to plebeian prejudice for deserting home duties, as their Landlord, and his wife, had done, for so many years, for the witching variety and fascination of Paris and Rome.

Mr. Fosterton retained some of the family *idiosyncrasy* that shrunk from incurring the reprobation of "the good men and true" among his dependents, whom he felt were sufficiently intelligent, to criticise and condemn any flagrant dereliction of duty, on his part, and would not shrink from giving public expression to feelings of disapprobation, even towards their own Landlord, where principle was involved; so that unusual pains had been taken, on this occasion, to conciliate what Mr. and Mrs. Fosterton deemed "local prejudices."

The Schools, which had been the pride and boast of the little Town of Fosterton, and its immediate neighbourhood, were ordered for Parade, and a respectable,

and most imposing muster they now made, passing in review before their Patrons, in three large, and separate bodies. First came the Infant School, toddling forward, with huge *bouquets* of flowers in their hands, supplied from the gardens of Fosterton Park, by the special order of its fair Mistress, neatly and comfortably dressed, their little chubby, laughing faces, sobered almost into solemnity, whilst they sang their Infant Hymn of Praise to that great Creator, and glorious Saviour, who humbled Himself to childhood's lowly state, and rebuked the pride of manly intellect in His disciples, when he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Next came "the Girl's School," the most grown amongst them bearing beautiful specimens of different varieties of needle-work, which, with a suitable address, were presented to their charming Patroness and Hostess for that day, who, with glistening eye, and heaving breast, expressed the most boundless admiration in return, with fervent wishes "that the school of Fosterton should continue a model of neatness, and order, to succeeding generations;" whilst on each member of this Juvenile deputation she bestowed, with that *naïve* grace Mrs. Fosterton so singularly possessed, some epithet of kindness and affection, that was remembered and recounted by the grateful recipients, when the fair Donor forgot, not only her own feelings, which were sincere at the time, but the very existence of such uninteresting folk as the humble School-girls of Fosterton.

The Boys address was read by their efficient and practical-looking Master, and duly responded to, in set terms, by Mr. Fosterton, whose features wore an air of *ennui*, and disgust, he could scarcely conceal, at the whole proceeding. "How tiresome," he exclaimed, as the children of the Fosterton Schools, comprising some hundreds of living and accountable souls, that were educated on his Estate for Time, and Eternity, now defiled before him, and retired from the Terrace.

"Do, Mr. Dean," he continued, addressing a rotund-

looking Dignitary, that stood beside him, "Set those boys at something; I see Mat Casey has the poles I desired erected; I hope they are well soaped, that no fellow may get the leg of mutton, at the top, until all have tried their luck, in climbing for it; keep them at anything, marbles, or pitch and toss, so that I am pestered with no more Hymns or Texts of Scripture, for this day."

The very Reverend Dean laughed applaudingly, and bustled off to execute his mission, and Mr. Fosterton, turning to his near neighbour, Sir Anthony Reynard, who was at that moment talking to Mrs. Fosterton, remarked, "How monstrously expensive it is, keeping up these Schools: I think they might be kept in good working order for less than one-half they stand me in."

"Indeed!" returned Sir Anthony, drily; "I thought Schools were quite your hobby, and that you wished your young Tenantry to know just as much as yourself, and acquire tastes, and habits, not exactly calculated to make good rent-payers, or increase the value of land to the Proprietor of the soil."

"Bosh," returned Mr. Fosterton; "Schools, I assure you, are no hobby of mine, it is the *mania*, just now, and Mrs. Fosterton, like others, is bit; but, let me tell you, if my views were carried out, there would be the School item less in the bill."

Sir Anthony laughed good-humouredly, while he turned to Mrs. Fosterton, and told her—

"She must subscribe to Mr. Fosterton's bill for the Suppression of Schools, as she had just expressed herself so thoroughly satisfied with the arrangements of hers, that like all her set, a Hobby was sure to be given up when it had once arrived at a state of perfection."

"But my Schools have not arrived at that state, Sir Anthony," cried Mrs. Fosterton, "the girls' hair is dressed in the most absurd manner, some wear curls, others plaited, while only a few wear it in the Madonna style, which I so much admire; it will take half a dozen scoldings of the Mistress, to produce anything like uni-

formity in those girls' appearance; and then they walk vilely, and shuffle their feet about so."

"Get a Dancing Master for them," returned Sir Anthony, with a sly suppressed smile; "and a Singing Master would do them no harm," he added, laughing. "I suppose it is because half of them are swaddlers, that they sing through their nose; or is it climate, that makes the peasant girl of Italy sing her Evening Hymn so exquisitely?" and he hummed the last lines of the *Ave Maria* in a voice of pathos and melody, that at once rivetted the attention of Mrs. Fosterton, whose devoted passion for music the wily Baronet was well aware of.

"Yours is a poetic religion, Sir Anthony," remarked Dean Shuffell, who had returned from seeing the leg of mutton pole soaped so as to baffle the most expert climber amongst the youngsters, "and you bring the handmaids of Poetry, Music, Painting, and Architecture to your aid, in making that religion most attractive."

"Nothing is too good, Mr. Dean, for to adorn and honor a good cause," returned Sir Anthony, with a dry short laugh, while he facetiously rubbed his hands, as if he had made some witty remark, the truth of which he himself had never fully established in his own mind.

"Scarcely necessary," remarked Lord Drydale, whose attention had been apparently much taken up by the interesting appearance of the School Children, and the air of comfort and neatness that pervaded the masses of tenantry scattered around. "Why call in," he continued, "the adventitious aid of art to embellish what emanated from Him who dwelleth in the Heavens, not 'in Temples made with hands,' whose accepted worshippers must be those only 'who worship in Spirit and in Truth?'"

"Lord Drydale is a black northern, Mrs. Fosterton," Sir Anthony cried, good-humouredly, turning to his fair Hostess, "and worships after a Williamite fashion, *sans ceremonie*. You must take my part, who am only an old-fashioned Papist, who attends mass after the fashion of the same Holy Faith that inspired a St. Cecilia, a Raphael, and a modern Pugin."

"I must desert you Henry," said Mrs. Fosterton, playfully, turning to Lord Drydale. "Sir Anthony has evoked superhuman genius, in defence of a mode of worship that is old enough at least to be respectable. And is not such genius," she asked enquiringly, turning to Lord Drydale, "the gift of God, and best applied, when dedicated to Him?"

"The superhuman genius you so much admire Emily," returned Lord Drydale, kindly, "embellished the religion of Solon and Romulus, as well as of *Pio Nino*; the Greek Sappho could rival your St. Cecilia, and the Architect of the Colosseum, heathen as he was, you will admit far surpassed in beauty, and grandeur, the boldest flight of your favorite Pugin."

"What a sad man you are for demolishing my little pet arguments," returned Mrs. Fosterton. "You see, Sir Anthony, what a poor advocate you have committed your cause to, though I feel in my soul that the lofty Cathedral Aisle, and the thrilling agonies of 'the *miserere*,' as rendered by Mario, excite me to a pitch of devotion I never felt, when engaged in dull common-place prayer."

"Emily," said Lord Drydale, with some severity of tone, "'spiritual worship' is not delusive excitement, we are enjoined to pray with the 'understanding' as well as with the 'spirit;' remember, the Apostle's definition of 'pure religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep yourselves unspotted from the world.'"

"You are always right, Henry," said Mrs. Fosterton, placing her arm affectionately within Lord Drydale's; "My good Brother-in-law is entirely too formidable an opponent for me to encounter, in an argument, so you must call, Sir Anthony, on Father Ignatius, to silence so sturdy an heretic, if the good man has not by this time run away from all the black-mouthed Protestants I see assembled in the Park."

"Walter is a book-worm," returned Sir Anthony,

"and may have mistaken them for brushwood, or what is most likely, never seen them at all. This good brother of mine, is, I assure you, the most absent man on earth, every thought of his soul is fixed on another, and I suppose a better world than this."

"He is very unlike his brother Churchman, the Dean here, then," whispered Mr. Fosterton into Sir Anthony's ear, "who never for a moment loses sight of the loaves and fishes, though a good fellow in the main, and most companionable."

"A capital fellow," returned Sir Anthony, "no starch or bigotry about him, I really think Mrs. Fosterton could not have made a luckier hit for this Parish and Neighbourhood, than picking him up, as she did, just at the time the Deanery was vacant, and your friends in power."

"It was a mere chance our falling in with him at all," returned Mr. Fosterton, as he, and the Baronet, strolled down a side walk ; "we met him at dinner at Bailey's, just after we came over, he mentioned you, and then Mrs. Fosterton remembered you had told her something of his being very clever, deep-read, and that sort of thing. His appointment was greatly opposed by the Saint party, and I don't know why, but that made Mrs. Fosterton more determined, after the liberties you had mentioned they had taken with her name, for wishing to employ Pugin to do something with that hideous Church at Fosterton. She carried her point, however," he continued, "and we find the Dean very useful ; he is a first-rate fellow at arranging a library, overhauls the boys' studies, and enjoys a good dinner, and good wine, as well as any man in Christendom."

"He is an elegant scholar, and a very agreeable man, to have in the country," returned Sir Anthony Reynard, "and you and Mrs. Fosterton made, as I said before, a most judicious selection in getting him the Deanery. Only imagine," he added, "how you would have been plagued with that old prig, Warner, had you, and Mrs. Fosterton, not gained your point : why, every Sunday you would

have been preached at in your own church, had he been made Dean, as the *Goody* Party wished, and held up during the week to public reprobation in every Farm house on your estate, if you did not go the whole hog with that sanctimonious old bigot."

"Still he is a man possessing wonderful influence over my best Tenants, and strange to say, is far more respected among men of your persuasion than Dean Shuffell, who lets every man go his own way," returned Mr. Fosterton.

"The vulgar are caught by mere surface and pretension," remarked Sir Anthony; "the Rev. Arthur Warner is not a whit holier, or better, than my good friend Dean Shuffell, but he is a narrow-minded bigot, that sticks up to what he professes, and though in the main a very shallow man, still carries the crowd along with him, by never shifting his position, or veering from his own prejudiced views; while poor Shuffell, clever and ingenious as he is, never can be appreciated by a vulgar mob of Fanatics, who are caught by Cant: like all clever men, he goes with the times, and finds Expediency now and again useful in spiritual, as well as temporal matters."

"He certainly is an agreeable, knowing fellow," returned the proprietor of Fosterton, laughing, "but the Drydales are terribly prejudiced against him, and will have it that such men as Shuffell, in High places, destroy, sooner or later, the people they are placed over."

"Whew!" cried Sir Anthony, "if you and Mrs. Fosterton are to be tabooed by the straightlaced opinions of Drydale, it would be better for you at once to abdicate all control over the Fosterton property, and let his Lordship manage it, as he does his own, for the benefit of such proselytizing bigots as Warner."

"It is not come to that yet, my dear fellow," cried Mr. Fosterton, gaily; "our present Dean suits my moderate views remarkably well, and is not the man to interfere with my arrangements, or those of Mrs. Fosterton, either in the Parish, or amongst our Tenantry."

"So much the better," observed the Baronet. "But

who have we here, under the old yew tree?" he added, suddenly stopping in front of the seat his brother occupied, but still not within some yards of the reverend father.

"A saint, I guess, of a different stamp," he added, emphatically, "from either Shuffell or Warner, with talents and acquirements that might make him Prime Minister of England; he is the humblest and lowliest minded of God's creatures; you saw him, Fosterton, at Rome, courted and caressed by Princes and Cardinals; he is the same man under that old yew tree, dead to this world, and living only for the Holy Faith that he left country and friends to serve, when scarcely more than a mere boy."

"The Churchman rose, as his brother ended this glowing eulogium, and carefully placing the book he held in his hand in the capacious breast pocket of his coat, advanced gracefully towards Mr. Fosterton, and expressed, in appropriate terms, "how much gratified he felt at being allowed the privilege of witnessing, that day, the rare sight of Landlord and Tenants met together, with such good cause to be equally well pleased with each other." The Gong's sound announced dinner served, in a monster Tent that stretched along the pleasure-ground immediately below the principal Terrace, in front of the Mansion, and here, surrounded by his Guests and Tenantry, Mr. Fosterton endured what was to his *exigée* taste a species of mental and physical torture, seeing so many vulgar, low-bred people, eating a substantial, well-served dinner; while he was expected to play the Host, and restrain his disgust, at their uneducated appetites.

The French *artiste*, who ministered to his own palate, had prepared for his master, on this occasion, some exquisite *morçeau*, to console him for the penance of dining amongst the million; but Mr. Fosterton's appetite, like many of his other tastes, was spoiled by indulgence, and he sat with a discontented air, and slight shrug, surveying the disappearance of the viands under the

keen appetites of his rustic neighbours around, while Mrs. Fosterton, all life and animation, added a zest and grace to the scene, by her sparkling beauty and urbanity, that set completely at their ease the humblest Cottier at her board, ably assisted as she was, by the considerate kindness and affable condescension of her sister, Lady Drydale; while Lord Drydale moved through the tent, seeing each party duly attended to, making a kind enquiry, or expressing a kind wish, towards men, and their families, who felt towards him, and the principles he on all occasions advocated so honestly, the most profound and attached respect; a feeling no way extended to their own Landlord—young, rich, and gifted with that general passport—good looks, a self satisfied air and manner, free from anything approaching to *hauteur*. Mr. Fosterton might have been popular amongst his inferiors and dependents, was the impression not counteracted by an air of unmistakeable insincerity in all he said or did, that warned his most trusting admirers, not to calculate too sanguinely on the stability of his friendship or principles. An inveterate love of pleasure, and of self-indulgence, were the characteristic traits of a disposition, aggravated into confirmed habit, by the mental culture he had received from an over indulgent mother, after he lost his father; before he emerged almost from childhood, his youth surrounded by mercenary sycophants, hypocritical in their religion, yet lavish in its profession, the young heir of Fosterton was not likely to learn, or practice, the apostolic virtues of self-denial, or single-minded truth in his after life; still his antecedents were so good, his race had been so distinguished for being generous, humane, God-fearing men, nurturing on their estate a *nucleus* of believing people, upright and industrious, that the Fosterton tenantry could scarcely realize that their present Landlord had degenerated from his ancestors, and only required to reside a little more amongst them, to be as good and as considerate as those who came before him; then, he had married young, was so attached to his beautiful devoted wife, and their lovely,

and noble looking offsprings, that it was hard to augur aught but good for a proprietor possessing so many external advantages and attractions. But He, only, who formed the human heart, can remove its plague spot; the high-souled wife, with aspirations after all that was beautiful and good in our fallen nature, yet devoid of "the one thing needful," a practical and living faith, sunk to the standard of her husband's mind, rather than raised him from the frivolity of short-lived pleasures, and grovelling pursuits.

There was a restless seeking after excitement about Mrs. Fosterton, strangely at variance with the domestic happiness she enjoyed; but hers was one of those fine organizations, where every sense, from its own intensity, assumes the form of a passion; all that was beautiful in nature and art she could enjoy profoundly, but the soul craved something better—greater—more enduring—and the glare of worldly prosperity hid that pearl of great price from the mental vision of Mrs. Fosterton; she had never prayed for the teaching of that spirit, that alone can "guide to the knowledge of all truth." Brought up a formalist in the Church of England, the spirit of her noble Liturgies she neither appreciated, nor understood—"The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life," and the ritual of a faith "once delivered to the Saints," without the quickening influence of that Divine spirit, was to this impulsive imaginative being but as the tinkling of a cymbal, a dead letter, without meaning, and void. Her early youth had been spent in the petty state of a Colonial Court, where her father held an official position, giving thus a false taste for pomp and splendour, that was to color her future life. Naturally quick, witty, and versatile, she early acquired those accomplishments which set off the personal attractions she possessed in no ordinary degree. But there was no depth of cultivation; the reasoning powers were not developed; fixed principles were not formed; and the exuberances of an impressionable fancy, never pruned into that healthy state of moral feeling, so vitally necessary to ensure the tranquillity of

after years. She married before she emerged from girlhood, and her husband's tastes were adopted as her own. It was only the carved seal affixed to the impressionable wax, never to be obliterated till the scorching process of fiery trial, or a dominant passion, reduced it again to a state of fusion; that time was to come, and this beautiful, fascinating woman, floated down life's tide as thoughtless for the future, and as little accountable for the present, as the summer butterfly sporting in the brilliant sunbeam, or the fleckered trout, borne along by the rapid stream.

Not so, her only sister, Lady Drydale, early united to a man of worth and probity. Without Mrs. Fosterton's brilliant beauty, and great susceptibility, she possessed a pleasing exterior, strong common-sense, and a most affectionate disposition. Early convinced of her own short comings, she sought grace and help, in the time of need, at the foot of the Cross, and with her husband walked consistently in that narrow straight road that leadeth into eternal life; bringing up their children in Gospel light, in the fear and love of God, they adorned the position an heavenly Father's providence had placed them in, with the grace of Christian humility, and lived respected and beloved by all within their sphere—burning and shining lights, amidst a crooked and perverse generation, strengthening the weak, shaming the profane. Lord and Lady Drydale were an honourable exception to the worldly expediency, and unfaithful wavering, of so many of their class in the present day, as well as the godless indifference to the word of the living God, in circles courtesy names Christian, indulging in practises that would shame an Heathen Land.

CHAPTER II.

The works of man inherit, as is just,
Their author's frailty, and return to dust;
But Truth Divine for ever stand secure,
Its head as guarded as its base is sure.
Fixed on the rolling flood of endless years,
The pillar of the eternal plan appears,
The raving storm, and dashing wave defies,
Built by the architect that built the skies.

COWPER.

THE rustic *fête* drew to a close, toasts had been given and responded to, by the principal tenants of Fosterton, in a spirit of good feeling, and good sense, that elicited even passing admiration from a Landlord so insensate as theirs usually was, to the moral elevation of his tenantry.

"How remarkably well those men expressed themselves to-day," he said during the course of the evening to Lord Drydale, "not a word out of place; what they meant to say, as well, and as aptly expressed, as my friend the Dean here, could have lectured them from the pulpit."

"You have a noble, intelligent tenantry, Fosterton, fully alive to the duties of their own position in life, and with honesty and manliness sufficient to remind their landlord they are in no way ignorant of his."

"That they did with a vengeance to-day," replied Mr. Fosterton, laughing. "I certainly would subscribe to Sir Anthony Reynard's suggestion of curtailing the salary of the Fosterton Schoolmaster, for teaching my tenantry many things they would have been much better without

ever knowing. What say you, Mr. Dean, don't you think Sir Anthony is right?"

"Sir Anthony is a clever man," evasively answered Dean Shuffell, who felt cautious of expressing approbation of the Baronet's views before Lord Drydale, whom he wished to conciliate with the terminus of his thoughts fixed on a vacant Bishopric, while floated through his reflecting faculties vague surmises, thrown out by the morning papers, of a Conservative Government coming into power before the next post.

"But," he continued, "Sir Anthony's own tenantry can scarcely read or write, and though he says they are the most punctual rent-payers in the whole country, I do not think they would bear comparison with yours."

"Bah!" cried Mr. Fosterton, contemptuously, "a set of ragamuffins, their homesteads nothing but squalor and muck."

"What cares Sir Anthony," remarked Lord Drydale quietly, "an ignorant tenantry never read the Bible; while his, can scarcely read the Primer. The Priest's power is undisturbed. Were Sir Anthony to educate them, as yours is, Fosterton, the word of God would no longer be a sealed book amongst them, and Sir Anthony, and his brother, the Jesuit, I was sorry to see here to-day, would soon find the soul-destroying mummeries of the Church of Rome forsaken by his tenantry, and that glorious gospel that was first preached to the poor, prized, and practised amongst them."

Dean Shuffell stole a glance at Mr. Fosterton's face, whose eyes met his for an instant; they said, as plain as eyes could say, "What a bigot!" but he only replied to one part of his brother-in-law's speech, saying coldly—

"That Jesuit, as you call him, is, I assure you, a vastly clever man, I met him at Rome, some years ago; he is a profound and elegant scholar, but no more a Jesuit than I am, never minds what anybody's Creed is, but seems to me to be always in the third heaven, very busy about his own soul, praying and fasting, that it should not be lost."

Dean Shuffell laughed, and Mr. Fosterton turned to

where Captain Gardner was at the piano, delighting Mrs. Fosterton and her friends with an exquisite air of Mendelssohn's, given with a purity and fervor, his fair hostess pronounced "irresistible."

"A very delightful melody indeed," said Lady Drydale, as he finished, "but the words are highly objectionable, a heathen might have sung them to Juno, as 'Heaven's high Queen,' but the word of God recognises no such Deity, Captain Gardner, as your 'Virgin Queen of Heaven,' and he Himself has told us 'that he is a jealous God,' and 'will not give His glory to another.'"

"She is His own immaculate mother, Lady Drydale," answered Captain Gardner, turning round on his seat from the instrument he had recently touched with such effect, and fixing his calm dark eyes with an expression of serious thought on her Ladyship's face; "and is it too much to hope," he said with fervour, "that the blessed Mary, with womanly mercy, saves those to whom her Son in justice cannot show mercy."

"I first deny she was immaculate," replied Lady Drydale, smiling at what she considered an untenable argument: "the Scriptures leave no doubt on the subject; there is no special clause recorded, that the Mother of our Lord, according to the flesh, was exempt from the sin of the first Adam, 'for all have sinned, said the Apostle Paul, and come short of the Glory of God;' and then, as to pardoning mercy, our Blessed Lord Himself has said, 'Come unto *me* all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' clearly showing the intercession of no created being was necessary to obtain succour and salvation from Him, whose peculiar mission was, to 'save a lost world.'"

"Still, in the Scripture you are so fond of quoting, Lady Drydale," returned Captain Gardner, "she is greeted with reverend adoration as, 'Hail Mary, Blessed art thou among women,' and that *all generations* should call her blessed."

"'Hail Mary,' is a mere mode of Conventional Salutation," returned her Ladyship, "and as such, the

expression 'Hail' is used in other parts of Scripture; and as to her being pronounced 'blessed,' the Jews might as well have worshipped Jael, for in the book of Judges you will find it written: 'Blessed above woman shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, Blessed shall she be above women in the tent,' and our Lord, in his sermon on the Mount, pronounced as 'Blessed,' the meek—the merciful—and the pure in heart."

"I loved my own mother so fervently," replied Captain Gardner, with a thrill of tenderness in his voice, "that I can hardly conceive a son denying a mother's request; and when I consider that Son was Holy and Sinless, his blessed mother is to me 'the Gate of Heaven,' and shall ever be 'the Morning Star' of my devotions."

"Christ has said, in the 10th Chapter of John," returned Lady Drydale, in a slow, serious tone of voice, "'I am the Door;' and again, in the 14th Chapter, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me;' and as recorded by the same Apostle in Revelations, 'I am the bright and morning star,' beware then, Captain Gardner," continued her Ladyship, kindly and impressively, "of falling into so hateful a sin as Idolatry, punished more than any other throughout the Jewish Dispensation by Divine wrath; prohibited by our Lord, when he said, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve;' while St. Paul's Admonition to the Corinthians is, 'Flee from Idolatry;' and St. John's to the early Christian Church 'Keep yourselves from Idols.'"

"Your Ladyship interprets Scripture with a right of private judgment I am too good a Churchman to subscribe to," said Captain Gardner; "the texts you bring forward, apply not to the Mother of God, who received power from her Son to 'succour the wretched, assist the weak-hearted, cherish the fearful.'"

"Such power you must have read of Captain Gardner, in the legends of the Saints," said Lady Drydale, "decreed by the Council of Trent, and adopted out of the Heathen Mythology, but no such power is recorded as delegated by Our Saviour in the Scriptures of Truth; on the con-

trary, when a certain woman in the crowd ascribed to His earthly parent somewhat of the blessedness you invest her with, He did not say, 'She is blessed, worship her,' but he did say, 'Yea; rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it:' while in the Epistles of our Lord's Apostles, and immediate Disciples, she is never mentioned at all, and in the Acts of the Apostles but once, and then not as an object of worship, but as a worshipper in the primitive Church at Jerusalem, with the other praying disciples, where it is simply recorded, 'And the mother of Jesus was there.'"

A strange expression passed over the countenance of Captain Gardner for an instant, and he seemed for a moment about to reply, but the passing emotion, whatever it might be, was mastered by the strong effort of an iron will, that left the young man's countenance, with its usual calm, immoveable expression, as he turned to Mrs. Fosterton, who during his argument with her sister sat half hid in the recesses of a capacious arm-chair, her bright glittering eyes fixed eagerly on the countenance of either disputant, drinking in the mental poison so skilfully administered by the Church Militant; while her exquisitely formed hands were clasped together in an attitude of intense interest, like some beautiful statue, whose fate depended rather on the decision of others than on the exercise of her own judgment and will.

She started as Captain Gardner approached and addressed her in a low voice:

"Your sister, Mrs. Fosterton, is a charming sophist, and would fain make me a miserable man, by robbing me of all hope in the Mother of Mercy, who, whenever I have been in trouble, like a true mother, never forsook me, and has been my sure refuge from sin and temptation."

This little piece of sentimental blasphemy was uttered by Captain Gardner with an air of earnest truthfulness, he knew was well calculated to impose on the imaginative feelings of the Lady he addressed, and prevent the poison from being neutralized by the powerful antidote of her sisters unanswerable arguments; then, with admirable

tact, leading the conversation insensibly to the discussion of the last Opera, he skilfully managed to induce Lady Drydale, and Mrs. Fosterton, to execute a spirited and difficult duet, which effectually engaged the interest of both sisters, who were excellent musicians, for the remainder of the evening.

CHAPTER III.

What a tangled web we weave,
When first we learn to deceive.

SCOTT.

DURING that same evening, within about three miles of Fosterton Park, sat in a sombre, heavy looking dining room, two gentlemen ; neither of them could be termed young, but still, both retained sufficient of the vigour and energy of youth, to permit their taking, for some years to come, an active part in the drama of life ; they were brothers, but in personal appearance wholly dissimilar, nor could a casual observer trace their near consanguinity in either voice or manner.

The elder of the two was somewhat below the middle size, inclined to corpulency, with common place, good humoured looking features, a sly cunning expression occasionally stealing out of the corner of his merry twinkling grey eyes, while his pursed up mouth bespoke an inveterate and facetious punster. His companion, on the contrary, was above the usual height of his fellow men, of a spare, emaciated, but still athletic frame, erect, and rigid, his features well formed, with eyes vigorous and observant, but as from long established habit, at times devoid of all expression.

Somebody has said, the eyes were the windows of the soul, but for our own part, if granted but the study of one particular feature to guide our judgment in the estimate of the inner man, we would, unhesitatingly, name that *débouche* of the human heart, that vestibule through which passes the half-formed thought, the reckless out-pouring of the human will, as well as the most studied,

elaborate argument—the lips around which the passions write their signature, in lines of unmistakeable character, stereotyping the passing thought, increased by that great blotter out—Time—nay, rendered more and more legible by his iron impress; but the mouth of the party we are attempting to describe, proved the general rule by an exception; the lips of Father Ignatius, as he was professionally termed, seemed only formed as a placid outlet to the dulcet voice that issued from their portals: it was hard to make up one's mind as to the expression conveyed by the sugared smile that sometimes flitted across a mouth nature had formed to betray the strongest passions, but was evidently educated to convey only the sounds that issued therefrom; and now, as he sipped his wine, he conversed in a low confidential voice with his brother, Sir Anthony Reynard, without one expression developed around his flexible lips, to convey any meaning but what they uttered.

“Fosterton, I quite agree with you, Anthony, is a conceited fool,” he said, “not calculated, I admit, to draw men after any opinion he might adopt, still, I think, you greatly underrate his individual conversion; remember, it would involve the certainty of one of those mischievous old Tory families, that for centuries were enemies to our holy faith, being brought within the pale of a church his forefathers defied as well as despised; his children are still young, and though their fickle parents might hereafter waver, when the excitement and *ecldt* of a public profession passed away, still the young, when subjected to the wholesome discipline of our Blessed Mother the Church, become her real, not her adopted children. Posterity is thus won, and heresy extinguished. If we gain the head, it is only a question of time, the tenantry embracing our ancient faith, with such a drowsy watchman as your pet Dean to guide their spiritual steps.”

“I think, Walter, I deserve some credit,” said Sir Anthony, with a short laugh, “for promoting Dean Shuffell; I managed the thing so adroitly, I never

was suspected : the old Dean was dying just at the time Mrs. Fosterton's most intimate friends came into power ; the Rev. Arthur Warner was the man named in every circle as his successor ; the saint party were rampant, so his appointment was nearly a certainty ; I wrote to you fully on the subject, you may remember—you were in Paris—that all your long-cherished hopes were frustrated. if such a man was to be the future Dean of Grimly, with the Living of Fosterton attached, and his residence within the Parish ; you tried his mettle at Rome, many years ago, and I knew him of old, bold, clever, and fearless in propagating the most damnable heresies, thrusting a Bible into the hands of every man, woman, and child within his reach ; never sleeping at his post ; a preaching, praying parson, that would baffle a whole Propaganda ; he went from house to house, through his Parish of Welmine, with his mild, conciliating way, that the Catholics themselves have told me, ' he thought of nothing but doing good ; ' so at all risks I made up my mind that Warner was not to be Dean of Grimly ; I started for London, met Mrs. Fosterton at a concert, and inflamed her imagination with a glowing panegyric on Shuffell, alluded to his signal success in educating, when he was a curate, some distinguished young men of rank, who all turned out prodigies. Mere moonshine, for all Shuffell's prodigies never achieved more than a degree in Trinity College without honours ; but Mrs. Fosterton is not very investigating, and I led her to speak of her own boys, their talents, and so forth ; Shuffell's capability to act under her superior judgment in directing their studies, caught her fancy amazingly ; we smuggled Fosterton out of London, though the season was not half over, and it was suggested to the Baileys, by a friend of the good cause, to give the Fostertons a dinner, after they came here."

" High Tories, like the Baileys, had withdrawn the light of their countenance from Shuffell, since he jumped ' Jim Crow,' and advocated, in a leading article, the National Board, so a good deal of tact was necessary to get him

asked, but Fosterton was known to be *exigé*, which among country neighbours, means, hard to be pleased, and a black-lettered pedant like Shuffell, with some *facetia* about him, was not to be overlooked in the *carte*. Mrs. Fosterton did the rest, though I was afraid Shuffell, by his outrageous flattery, would cook his own goose, with a vengeance; but a charming woman can swallow a good deal, if there is any piquancy in the sauce, and Mrs. Fosterton coaxed and bullied her friends in the Castle of Dublin, as if the Protestant Church depended on the appointment of her *protégé*, while our Propaganda friends on the other side of the water, as you know, Walter, well backed up the application, and so Shuffell, to the surprise of everybody but the initiated, and to his own amazement, at what he terms his 'good luck,' was foisted into the Deanery in the teeth of the Evangelical party."

"And now he would go any length with that party, if they would only indulge him with 'Lawn Sleeves,' " remarked the Jesuit father, drily.

"To be sure he would," returned Sir Anthony, "but their day is gone by, and the poor Dean, with his large family, and all the debts incurred by the man's vanity, as Dean of Grimly, now and again sports Puseyite predilections, with an eye to some of our friends, who sit in high places."

"He is precisely the right man in the right place," said Father Ignatius, emphatically, "and must remain in it, to guide such men for the holy ends proposed by our Blessed Church; their vanity must be stimulated; Dean Shuffell's name, for some time to come, will stand second on the minister's list for the next vacant Heretic Bishopric, but it never shall stand first; the Dean of Grimly, a Spiritual Lord, with yearly thousands to spend on his expensive tastes and vanity, would fulminate calumny and execration against a rival church, seeking to recover back her long-lost Hierarchy, and vast church property, his robber grasp would hold our confiscated rights, as tenaciously as the worst Bible Monger on the Puritan

Bench, but as Dean of Grimly, his expenses will increase vastly, with his expectations of a Bishopric; already they are far beyond his income; pecuniary difficulties admit of being increased by judicious treatment; the Propaganda wield a lever that is sure to crush the black drop of heresy out of the needy man's heart; in due time Dean Shuffell's church preferment will be sequestered, his name expunged from the minister's list of embryo Bishops, with no sympathy from his brother parsons, who look upon him as an insincere worlding, crest-fallen, harassed by debt and difficulty; it is not in the nature of things (it is not in Dean Shuffell's nature, at least!) to grovel on a Curate's salary, where he strutted in the full-blown pride of a dignitary, with the Church of Rome extending her arms to receive him, not as a churchman, but as a layman, to do her work, and be paid well for doing it in some foreign land, a bait too tempting, Anthony, to require much gilding to be swallowed with avidity."

"What a master-mind you have, Walter!" cried Sir Anthony, with a genuine burst of admiration at what he considered his brother's superhuman prescience, in dealing with present materials, to be fashioned into the warp and woof of some future fabric, created to suit the purposes of a Jesuit's iron and predetermined will."

"I am but the humble instrument, Anthony," replied Father Ignatius, meekly; "our Holy Mother Church, aided by our blessed Order, can subdue the unruly will of man, and frustrate the enemies of the immaculate Virgin: to exalt the adorable Mary," he added, loftily, "we must use base weapons, as well as pure and tried steel."

"Heaven and Earth shall not prevail against us," said the Baronet, solemnly, "and it seems to me as if the time were come for the triumph of our ancient and Holy Faith; a Cardinal once more performs High Mass in London, the spirit of the Propaganda is everywhere, it reigns as undisturbed in Royal Colleges, as it does in the Eternal City."

"Watch and pray," said the Jesuit, devoutly, "pray daily the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, under her four-and-forty titles, that the Queen of our Salvation may subdue all men and things under her feet; that the immaculate Virgin, the Lady of Hosts, may cause you to be a worthy and active member of that glorious Propaganda she miraculously founded on earth, to extinguish heresy, edify the faithful, and glorify her own adorable name, throughout all ages and generations."

"I repeat the blessed Virgin's Litany at least once a day," returned Sir Anthony, who though in many things a clever, intelligent man, clear-sighted, and reflective in his worldly matters, still received, without questioning, any dogmatical absurdity propounded to him by a church he believed to be infallible.

"I use also the rosary to my patron Saint, Anthony, whom I invoke daily to exalt our Holy Faith, and banish heresy from my native land; and I invoke all Saints, with the blessed Virgin at their head, to purge Fosterton and its neighbourhood from the damning heresy that doomed our father to an untimely end."

"*Requiescat in pace*," said his brother, reverentially crossing himself at the same time.

"Work, Anthony, as well as pray, and such heretic dogs as Drydale will be sent howling into hell fire, while their lands and titles shall be seized on by the true flock of Peter's fold, and Propaganda cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea."

"My blood curdles within my veins," observed Sir Anthony, bitterly, "whenever I meet Drydale; I shall never forget our first interview at Fosterton Park, now some years ago; I had not heard he was there, and Mrs. Fosterton, who is very fond of dramatising a scene, had me to dinner, and succeeded in placing us at table exactly opposite to each other. I read in the man's eyes and manner, that he looked on *our* meeting as a *contretemps*, for he evidently could not get over that he was face to face with the son of the man his loyal father, as president of a bigoted, one-sided court-martial, doomed, as a rebel

felon, to the scaffold; his Protestant blood, I suppose, chafed at the meeting; still (I think at the suggestion of Mrs. Fosterton), he asked me to take wine; I felt her eye was upon us both, but I filled my glass slowly, calmly fixed my eyes on Drydale's, bowed coldly, as I raised the wine to my lips, and was in the act of replacing it, untasted, on the table, glancing at the same time towards my charming hostess a look that conveyed my meaning for this discourtesy to her brother-in-law, when she fixed her speaking eyes on my face with such a glance of deprecating entreaty for forbearance, that I bowed as if in mock submission to her sovereign will, and drained my glass at one gulp, as a pledge of oblivion."

"You did well, Anthony," replied the reverend Father, "an heretic enemy should never be allowed to gain an advantage over us by any unnecessary betrayal of our own private thoughts; and besides, you advanced the good cause of our Holy Religion, with a woman of quick sensitive feelings, sure to sympathise with the suffering son of a Sainted Martyr, forgetting and forgiving in her presence, and for her sake, his enmity to his hereditary foe."

"I gained a point by it," returned his brother; "ever since there is a sort of mysterious misunderstanding between me and Mrs. Fosterton, in Lord Drydale's presence, which tells against his influence in imbuing his sister-in-law's mind with his own and his wife's absurd and avowed bigoted prejudice against Catholicity."

"Never get into an argument with those people, Anthony," said the priest, warmly; "the Devil uses the reasoning faculties for subverting our holy faith. A well applied witticism is perhaps the best answer a layman can give to an heretical text, from a Protestant Bible, the introduction of which, in good society, should always be treated as an unpardonable breach of etiquette and good breeding."

"Certainly," replied the Baronet, "and I have always found a *bon mot* most successful in frightening a Bible Monger, but with the Anglican Church an avowed

Catholic can do but little, in the first stage of conversion. A revival of the obsolete forms of an upstart church, not three centuries old, that retained, at her separation from the Holy See, ceremonies she feared at the time relinquishing, lest she might shock those who practised them from their birth, now impiously set aside, and preached against by the low church party, as valueless and unnecessary—I say, a revival of these forms, associated as they are with the introduction of mediæval lore and usages, the more attractive because little understood, seems to me,” continued Sir Anthony, “as I may say, the first rudiment to be acquired in learning the value of our holy faith, it is the first step in the right direction. Once imbue a Protestant’s mind that candles should be lighted during the time of religious worship, that he should bow to the east in the Creed, that the table he takes his bread and wine off should be called an altar, and decorated as such with flowers and incense, cloths of many colors, for different seasons, red, purple, and violet, a wood screen between the people and the man they nickname a Priest, with a cross surmounting all: such spurious forms of Catholicity, or as the Bible bigot would call them ‘mummers,’ are soon followed by using the practice of fasting, observing Saint’s days, using the sign of the cross in prayer, and investing their minister with spiritual powers he does not possess, nor are recognised by the Anglican Church, as at present constituted. Its authority is soon called in question, with no visible head but the ruling sovereign; no universality of belief, nor miraculous power, to distinguish her from Heretical Schism. I look upon the Oratorian, or so named Puseyite, but as a Catholic Chrysalis, to be warmed into beauty and life by the converting power of our Holy Church; a brilliant and fully developed butterfly, when the proper season arrives.”

“Anthony, you should have been a Churchman,” observed his Jesuit brother, surveying the Baronet with a look of quiet admiration.

“I was bred one, Walter,” returned Sir Anthony,

"and had the bill of attainder against our old title not been reversed, would long since have been one of your order at Rome."

"It is best as it is," returned his brother; "Sir Anthony Reynard, with wealth and position, can advance the Holy Faith of Loyola, quite as much as a lowly Priest; but we must not forget your good friends at Fosterton are over the first stage of the journey, you so well describe, *en route* to our holy infallible Church, and must be expedited on the way; and this reminds me of an interview I promised Gardner, after the midnight mass is concluded, and the hour for its celebration cannot be far distant I should think," added the Priest, as he stood up, and looked at the Time-piece that stood on a marble slab in the room.

The next moment he withdrew, closing the door quietly and noiselessly on his brother, who had sunk into a dreamy sort of reverie in his comfortable arm chair.

CHAPTER IV.

Hast thou admitted, with a blind fond trust,
The lie, that burned thy father's bones to dust?
That first adjudged them Heretics, then sent
Their souls to Heaven, and curst them as they went?
The lie, that Scripture strips of its disguise,
And execrates above all other lies ;
That lie, that claps a lock on mercy's plan,
And gives the key to an infirm old man,
Who once enthroned, in apostolic chair,
Is made a God, and sits omniscient there ?
The lie, that knows no kindred, knows no friend,
But him that makes its progress his chief end ;
That having spilt much blood, of that will boast,
And makes a saint of him that sheds the most?

COWPER.

AS the great clock of Croxley Abbey tolled twelve, a small, but very devoted band of worshippers, had assembled in the cloistered chapel, that occupied a principal wing of the mansion, together with the apartments appropriated to Walter Reynard, or Father Ignatius, as he was more generally called, whenever he visited his family "roof-tree," in Ireland. The Abbey itself was a picturesque old building, originally bestowed by the Reynards, of the 13th century, on Mother Church ; but though spoliated as a monastery at the Reformation, and suppressed, still the Reynards, by some stroke of diplomacy, continued to keep possession of the estate ; and the great grandfather of the present Sir Anthony erected a comfortable and substantial mansion, with a Turret preserved here and there, of the old building, that gave

it an air of pretension, sufficient to render its ancient designation, "Croxley Abbey," not inappropriate.

The grounds around were small and well kept, the bulk of Sir Anthony's landed estates, which were considerable, lying in another county ; but he being the only Romanist who possessed property in or about Fosterton, it was considered good policy by the Reynards, for some generations back, to make the Abbey their chief residence.

In the town of Fosterton, Sir Anthony had purchased up the only portion of it that did not belong to Mr. Fosterton. This was a small slip of ground immediately adjoining the town, inherited by a distant relative of the Fosterton family, who resided in England ; but Sir Anthony, who long had an eye on, as he termed "opening" this Protestant Borough, manœuvred to induce him to sell it, did not higggle at the price asked, but secured this coveted plot of land, during the minority of Mr. Fosterton. It was now the most flourishing part of the town, presenting an imposing looking chapel, by Pugin, a nunnery, and monkery attached, an Elizabethian Miniature Castle, for the Parish Priest's residence, and showy shops, set up by "the faithful," and patronised indiscriminately for their fashion and variety.

Some of their proprietors were, on the present occasion, amongst the midnight worshippers in the little chapel at Croxley Park ; the Parish Priest, a fat, jolly looking middle-aged man, with his Curate, or, as he was more frequently termed, "Coadjutor," a sturdy democrat, of about five-and-twenty, assisted the officiating priest, in the solemn duties of offering up the Mass, or Sacrifice, the Church of Rome, with daring blasphemy, assumes to offer, when her priests profess to create an incarnate God, Body, Soul, and Divinity, with flesh, bones, and blood, out of a simple wafer, that after the priest pronounces it to be the Son of God, that "Holy One, who never saw corruption," still remains a wafer, and retains the smell, taste, and decaying properties only of flour and water.

"Christ," says St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, "was *once* offered, to bear the sins of many, and by *one* offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "Christ," says St. Peter, "hath *once* suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

Yet an idolatrous Church, in her pretended sacrifice of the mass, denies the truth of these plain declarations of Scripture, and teaches that *one* sacrifice of Christ is insufficient, and that on her million altars a crucified Saviour is offered up daily, and hourly, by sinful men of like passions, to every child of fallen Adam, yet daringly professing to change, by muttering a Latin prayer, each individual wafer that passes through their hands, into a living Christ, both God, and man, to be adored and eaten by "the faithful," at the same moment, throughout the world.

"The workman made it, therefore it is not God," said the Prophet Hosea. "They worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made," wrote the Prophet Isaiah. While in the 19th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we find the craftsman of the shrine of an heathen Goddess reviling the Apostle Paul, for teaching, and persuading men, "that they be no Gods which are made with hands;" yet this gross fabrication of the 14th century is upheld and propagated in the 19th, by the craftsmen of Rome.

The Latin prayer is said, which a dominant Church, who writes herself infallible, decrees, in the twinkling of an eye, shall change the beggarly elements of flour and water into an incarnate God; the priestly knee is bended, in devout adoration; "the Host," or sacrifice, is lifted high above the priestly head, for the worship of the People; and with "a lie in his right hand," the priest places on the tongue of each kneeling Postulant an individual Christ, not to be chewed, or else incur mortal sin; for "a bone of him shall not be broken," devoutly quotes the Church, while the reasoning faculties suggest, confirmed by the word of God, that a

miracle, to be genuine, must be apparent to the senses and understanding—a test the Idol wafer is never submitted to, lest the human taste should discover its unchanged properties—a simple, unleavened wafer.

That night, in the little chapel of Croxley, were sincere worshippers of this leading dogma of a Church, whose assumption of priestly power, in the middle ages, led her Popes and Churchmen “to trample on the necks of Kings.” In our day, the entire subjection of the Laity to the control and tyranny of Ecclesiastical rule, not only in spiritual, but temporal matters, is equally the object of a thoroughly well organised Jesuit Propaganda.

No mean exponent of its doctrines led the imposing ceremonies in the little chapel of Croxley. Father Ignatius performed his part in a style of acting, such as to amaze, and edify exceedingly, at least one of his fellow priests, while those who worshipped outside the rude screen, could have deified him as the object of their profoundest veneration. The young coadjutor had never heard mass in a foreign land, and never in his own performed by any but common-place men. Father Ignatius was not of this order, and the rich variety of his sacerdotal robes—the costly materials they were composed of—the deep intoning melody of his cultivated voice—the grace and ease with which he performed the difficult *role* of a midnight mass, for the repose of his own father’s soul, with a look of holy and lofty awe pervading his noble features, and intense devotion, as he chaunted the Latin office to the praise and glory of the immaculate Mary, formed a combination of grandeur, and power, such as Father Tim O’Shaughnessy never before had witnessed, and which completely threw him off his centre, so as to bungle through his own part of the ceremony in a very distracted manner.

The man who played Punch in the Puppet show, on the stage of a country Barn, witnessing for the first time Talma, in the Grand Opera, could not have exhibited more excited bewilderment than poor Father Tim did, in watching and admiring the evolutions of his superior, on

this occasion; while the good humoured Parish Priest, who had been at Rome many years before, felt less surprise, and never having approved much, as he expressed it, of "Italianising the mass"—being "a plain man, he liked a plain mass, for plain people," and now jogged his coadjutor's elbow, "to mind what he was about," and so called back his abstracted attention to his own peculiar part of the solemn farce enacted.

The lights were extinguished in the little chapel, save the mystical three, which burnt bright and clear on the altar, throwing all in the background into deep shadow, while a masterly painting of the crucifixion, with the light thrown full on it, almost looked life-like; beside it was a Madonna of rare beauty, the outline softened by the subdued light in which it was placed: while before it knelt the figure of a man, in deep abstracted devotion.

All other worshippers had retired; his head sunk low on his breast, his arms crossed penitentially, while he chaunted in a voice, low, musical, and full of pathos, the Litany of the Virgin.

The office was ended—the suppliant touched with the thumb of his right hand his forehead, left and right shoulder, in succession, finishing with a thump of his closed fist on the centre of his breast, so performing reverentially "the sign of the cross," and rose from his kneeling posture, as the slight sound of a silvery toned bell was heard in the apartment adjoining the chapel, rung, it would seem, by some invisible power, who watched the close of his devotions: for, at its first tinkle, the young man hastily passed across the front of the altar, (not forgetting, however, to bend his knee to the Host, or the sacrifice in the golden pix on the centre), and entered a small door, completely concealed by drapery, at the opposite side from where he had knelt, and the next moment Captain Gardner, on bended knee, saluted Father Ignatius, who stood disrobed, in his usual dress, calm and immovable, before a picture of the Virgin and Child, with a single lamp suspended above the object of his meditation.

There was not much attempt at ornament in the room, the walls were covered with well executed maps, save the space exactly opposite the Virgin Mother, on which hung a striking and sombre portrait of Ignatius Loyola. The furniture was simple, and severe in design, with an air of extreme neatness pervading the whole apartment.

"Benedicite!" said the Jesuit, fixing his energetic eyes on the kneeling suppliant before him. "Rise, my son," he continued, in a mild voice, while he motioned with his hand to a chair, and sunk himself easily and gracefully into one exactly opposite that he had intimated Captain Gardner should accept.

That gentleman stood, however, with downcast eyes, and a look of humble submission, beside it, until Father Ignatius was seated, he then sat down quietly and demurely, with an air very different from his usual manner, and seemed to await Father Ignatius opening the conference.

"The Drydales leave on Monday, I understand?" said the reverend Father, interrogatively.

"That day is fixed for their departure for Ashworth," returned Captain Gardner; "but it would have been well, if their visit could have been curtailed before this; already, Lord and Lady Drydale are alarmed at what they call, 'the introduction of innovations,' and the power of both over Mrs. Fosterton is immense, particularly her Ladyship's. Were the sisters to be much together, I should despair of fixing Mrs. Fosterton's faith, for she recurs, over and over again, to the Scripture arguments of Lady Drydale."

"He never despaired," said Father Ignatius, emphatically, fixing his eyes on the dark and resolute countenance of the portrait before him. "The founder of our holy order knew not the word, 'despair,' nor should his followers, for with us all things are possible."

"Mea Culpa!" cried the young man; "but I only meant, Father, to convey, that much cannot be attempted with the Fostertons, while the enemies picquets are so

near, and so wide awake to the slightest advance on their position; such sentries as the Drydales never are found napping on their post, and to openly attack their Bible barricade is but defeat."

A grim smile passed over the countenance of the holy Father, as he replied —

"You are not a guardsman here, Father Peter, speak, then, as if in chapter with your own Holy order; neither with the language, or weapons of carnal warfare."

The young man looked abashed, and somewhat confused for a moment, and it was ludicrous to observe, how mechanically he sought refuge from the passing embarrassment, by executing an abortive twirl of his well cared for moustache, relinquished, however, with some abruptness, by a call "to order" from the vigorous eye of Father Ignatius, who, after a slight pause, said rather kindly :

"You must guard, my son, against insensibly adopting, where there is no reserve, the language and sentiments of that part of the vineyard, where, for the glory of our sacred Mother Church, and at the command of our Holy Order, your conflict lies. You have been placed by infallible wisdom at a perilous post, but the more danger the more glory, and let not such avowed heretics as the Drydales cause a true son of Layola,"—and here the Jesuit Father bowed reverentially to the picture of his founder—"to adopt the language of despair, with powers at his command that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against."

"Then I would counsel, Father," returned the younger Jesuit, "that the hindrance to the triumph of our Holy Faith in this instance should be removed."

"Not yet," replied Father Ignatius, "the Church deals mercifully, unless coerced by a strong necessity. On Monday, you say, those people will leave; this is only Thursday, much evil may be done to a good cause, even in a few days the plans of years frustrated, if the watchmen of the Holy City are not faithful; attach yourself entirely to the society of Lady Drydale during

the remainder of her stay; never make the slightest allusion to the private chapel, you so cleverly persuaded Mrs. Fosterton to get up, in the Park House, throw cold water on the subject, if introduced, by any other person in your presence; let not a picture or mediæval ornament, be unpacked during the remainder of their visit; in fact, impress on her Ladyship that you are a young man of serious views, lamentably led astray, and requiring the good offices of an Evangelical friend, to enlighten you on religious matters; in her Ladyship's zeal for your salvation, she will overwhelm you with Scripture arguments; appear at times baffled and convinced, but never thoroughly persuaded; this will create and keep up a considerable interest on her part; this interest she will express to her sister; without one word of warning against talents you must teach her to respect, but arguments so flimsy as scarcely to need refutation; this will establish a pleasing impression on Mrs. Fosterton's mind; she will take her sister's place when Lady Drydale is gone, and perhaps become the exponent of her religious views, and your spiritual instructress; never array yourself in argument against her, but lead her mind into a vortex of exciting amusement, that will completely efface any religious impression her sister may have made on her mind. It is at the return tide, when reaction sets in, after pleasure's cup is drank, that our Holy Faith is best, and most profitably exhibited; the vacuum in the exhausted heart is filled up by the Holy exercises of our Church, the enchanting melody of her music, the touching beauty of her paintings, and the solemn grandeur of her architecture; then it is such a mind as Mrs. Fosterton's can be taught to emulate the sanctity and devotion of the early Saints of an infallible Church, and submit only to the teaching of that Priesthood, who hold the keys of Heaven, and visibly exhibit, as their Head, the Sovereign Pontiff, who reigns in the Eternal City."

A long pause ensued after Father Ignatius had done speaking; his companion leant his face on his hand,

thoughtfully; then, as if a sudden thought had struck him, he said—

“You would advise, then, reverend Father, that the decorating of the Oratorian Chapel should be postponed until Mrs. Fosterton’s mind recovers from the impression I fear her sister has made, but it will be difficult to get up amusement in this neighbourhood, which is a dull one, to interest her; something new, and that will cause herself to be an object of interest and wonder, is best calculated to absorb her attention.”

“Try a Pic-nic, on a large scale, or a Monster Concert,” said the elder Jesuit. His Junior smiled sarcastically.

“Pic-nics are too common-place for the Fostertons, and Concerts in the country are sure to be failures: her schools are, at present, the most engrossing, but these she can be easily disgusted with; and the excitement of dismissing the master and mistress will effectually take up her attention, until I can persuade Fosterton to get up Private Theatricals; but he is hard up just now, after being cleaned out in London.” And Father Peter, or Mr. and Mrs. Fosterton’s intimate friend Captain Gardner, shook his hand, after a very knowing fashion, effectively illustrating Mr. Fosterton’s practical knowledge of the dice-box.

“Indeed!” cried his superior, “then I am glad to find you have not been idle; it is well; such men as Fosterton must be plunged into difficulties before they give up a party that will do nothing for them; the Private Theatricals suit him, as well as his wife; he must be got to take a part; like dram-drinking, acting is an acquired taste: Fosterton must be a player.”

His companion smiled at the pun, while Father Ignatius, who never meant perpetrating such a witticism, went on—

“It is an expensive taste, too, and will involve a far larger expenditure than his French Cook, who has become so necessary to his existence.”

“One way or another,” returned Captain Gardner,

"he is hard up, and I have succeeded in persuading him to keep his affairs a profound secret from Drydale."

"Quite right," returned Father Ignatius, "and now have you brought me the memorandum I desired?"

The young man drew a small package from his pocket, and placed it in the hands of his superior: the Jesuit's practised eye glanced over it for a moment.

"High nervous temperament," he read aloud, as if to himself. "Strong susceptible feelings," "generally evanescent," a superstitious turn of mind, with an intense desire after metaphysical knowledge," mesmerism and electro-biology might be employed advantageously.

"Your leave of absence is up in a fortnight, I believe," he said, addressing Father Peter. That gentleman gave a military inclination of the head, while his companion went on. "Your place must be supplied by some one who can administer chloroform, or those *subtle essences* that prepare the mind for Supernatural Phenomena, who is best suited to deal with such a temperament as Mrs. Fosterton's, but you will be still wanting, your leave of absence from your regiment must be renewed; the Private Theatricals must go on, the Mediæval Chapel"—and he smiled contemptuously—"must be fitted up, a suitable Chaplain procured, and 'a medium,' too, to reveal the secrets of another world to this enquiring Lady, who thinks she has power to command spirits, black, blue, and grey."

The younger Jesuit bowed respectfully, with an air of humble acquiescence, to the will of his superior, then, after a slight pause, he said—

"The notes I have prepared, reverend Father, I think you will find sufficiently diffuse; the character of each member of the Fosterton family, and those of their country neighbours, with whom they at all associate, are drawn, not only from my own observation, but from valuable hints, given me by Rimino."

"No man is a hero to his own valet," continued Father Peter, while a humorous smile played round the corners of his moustached lip, "and Fosterton the last man in the world to conceal a weakness from his; besides,

Rimino has pumped every heretic servant in the establishment, as well as Dean Shuffell's domestics, and those of other families they visit, and can so give a pretty accurate guess of their respective master's and mistress's private sentiments and intentions, as well as any peculiarity of temperament they may possess."

"Rimino is a faithful servant of the Church, and confessed to me the morning after my arrival at Croxley Abbey," said Father Ignatius. "I find he gives entire satisfaction as a *valet*, and has become indispensable to his weak, vain master; there is a member of the household, however, truly objectionable, and must be removed."

"You mean Mrs. Felton, reverend Father," returned his companion. "I have affixed, you will find, a note to her name to that effect, but she is a prodigious favourite with her mistress, and was head nurse to her two boys, as well as the little girl; she is a woman of a better class in life, well-educated, and intelligent: family misfortunes compelled her to hold hitherto a subordinate position, and her great attachment to Mrs. Fosterton's own family (which is sincere), led her into her service; that Lady has rewarded her now, by appointing this favourite as nursery governess to her only Daughter, and I have been much puzzled how best to get rid of so dangerous and so bigoted an heretic."

"Her mistress, Rimino thinks, cannot be prejudiced against her, the woman is so frank and observant; she must be made sick, 'nigh unto death,'" remarked the reverend Father, speaking slowly; "you have the work written by one of our blessed order on '*subtle essences*;' let the illness be rapid, exhausting, but not mortal. the patient capable of removal, native air her best restorative; Rimino has opportunities of carrying out this good work; see that he does so, quickly, and effectually; and now," added Father Ignatius, rising from his chair, "you have nothing further, I suppose, to communicate, except in the confessional?"

"Just so, reverend Father," returned the young man,

sadly, "and my conscience has been sorely burthened for weeks back, without receiving absolution of the Church for sins committed in my assumed position."

"I thought you had received a plenary indulgence?" said the elder Jesuit, abruptly; "if not, it must be granted; for on no account are you to confess to the Parish Priest, or Bishop of this Diocese—factions, electioneering politicians, such as they, could not understand your sacred mission, and should not hear your confession. Their vulgarity and violence have injured our Holy Faith in this country with the aristocratic classes; it is important you should keep aloof from the Irish Parochial Clergy, they identify themselves with the cause of the People; your mission is to win over the Gentry, not by the profession of a faith that is vulgarised by the Roman Priesthood, and people of this country, but by reviving the obsolete usages and formula of the Anglican Church, through the medium of the senses, capturing the heart, flinging a *mediæval* halo around the ceremonies and observances approximated to the rites of our Holy, infallible faith, sure to be received into her bosom sooner or later, those who grope for light in the darkness of the middle ages."

Father Ignatius entered the chapel as he uttered the foregoing truism, followed slowly by his companion, with an air of sadness and abstraction, that painfully betrayed "the peace which passeth understanding" was at that moment a stranger to the breast of Father Peter.

The door of the Confessional closed on both Priests, the sorrows and sins of one heart were laid bare to his fellow sinner—the "innermost thoughts" of both to the searching eye of Him, who has said, by the mouth of His Apostle, John, "If we confess our sins to our Great High Priest, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

CHAPTER V.

The Stranger meets

No cheerful brow along her silent streets,
 The numbing hand of Bigotry is spread,
 And with torpedo touch her life has fled ;
 Some black procession moves with mournful sound,
 In sluggish trail, along the darkened ground,
 Or pamper'd Cardinals, in scarlet pride,
 Church Militant, the kneeling slaves bestride.
 From Puppet tricks, and Papal pomp he flies,
 To muse, where ancient Rome neglected lies.

* * * * *

ROME, A POEM.

IT was the season of *malaria* at Rome, its noble Palazzi were deserted, its gorgeous Churches lacked worshippers, the Pope himself had fled from the Vatican, to enjoy the cooling breezes of Monte Cavallo, in his huge country house, the Palazzo Pontificio, the neglected streets fœtid with filth, sent forth a pestiferous vapour, so fatal to the *dilettanti*, whose love of art lures him on to brave an autumn in the Eternal City. The few people to be met with in the streets looked fever-stricken and unhealthy, while some dark sluggish procession of cowed monks or *religieuses*, bore with much pomp, along the centre of the highway, "the Host," or wafer God, to comfort the dying, or as it might be, the effigy of some favourite Saint or precious relic, whose sanctity had been duly certified by his Holiness; the attendant Priests, singing their low funereal chaunt, while lighted tapers blazed around the decorated idol, as it blocked up the pathway from each passer by, to be acknowledged by an

act of solemn worship; the French Troops on guard presenting arms to the Invisible Deity, with the same ceremony observed in saluting their own Imperial Sovereign.

The houses of the poorer classes surrounded with a *miasma*, of obnoxious effluvia, evidencing too truly the absence of cleanly habits in their occupants, as well as total neglect in their rulers to provide for either the health or comfort of the masses—the gilded coaches of the Cardinals rattled along the dusty Campagna, while some of those dignitaries condescended to touch mother earth, their red hats and scarlet cloaks, the signal for all other Pedestrians on the pathway to give place to their “Eminences,” while each of those Spiritual Princes was followed by his own private Chaplain, and at least three sturdy footmen, with jack boots, cocked hat, and ample blue cloaks, fringed and bound with tarnished silver, carrying a huge Italian umbrella, whose dimensions were sufficiently large for the roof of a moderate sized summerhouse.

Such a party as we have attempted to describe blocked up the pathway, as a man, habited in the dress of a monk, strode hastily past, without acknowledging the presence of the Prince Cardinal, and with an air of haughty carelessness, very different from the formal gravity usually observed in saluting the august personage in the scarlet cloak and red hat, he walked rapidly on, while his Eminence, Cardinal Fortuni, in high wrath, with a spot on his brow nearly the colour of his stockings, enquired of his chaplain :

“Did he know the name or order of the insolent monk who had just passed so unceremoniously ?”

The broad shovel hat at his side could not enlighten his Eminence ; that reverend gentleman having his attention occupied with other matters at the time, did not observe the offensive breach of etiquette, and for such inattention was severely reprimanded by his master : but to make up for his negligence, he was now curiously alive to every particular respecting the rudeness that had been offered to his *chef*, and, in his zeal, undertook

"to overtake the monk, rebuke him soundly for such offensive rudeness, and make him return and crave pardon from his Highness, Cardinal Fortuni."

His sacred Eminence graciously assented, first directing the little fat man with the shovel hat to signal the three footmen to approach nearer "his Excellenza," as well as the gilded coach *en attendant*, during the brief absence of his immediate body-guard, lest the future Vicar of Christ should encounter dismay, or alarm, during his short promenade.

The burly Churchman started at a smart pace to overtake the unceremonious monk; but as his out-door exercise never exceeded a quiet amble beside Cardinal Fortuni, when his Eminence preferred, occasionally, a slow dignified walk of half-an-hour in the Campagna, to the rumbling rattle of his state coach, the shovel hat made but little way, while the monk strode along with the hasty and rapid stride of a well-disciplined pedestrian.

The firm quick step of manly youth, with a definitive object in view, was sure to distance his Eminence's chaplain, though the good man's zeal broke into "a trot," and would, no doubt, have attained the speed of "a canter," had not a turn in the pathway shut out his master's eye from observing such laudable exertions; so the little fat man wisely gave up the chase, while he stopped to draw breath, wipe the moisture from his flushed brow, and arrange a fit and proper excuse in his own mind, that would pass muster with his Eminence, in failing to overtake the unmannerly stranger.

The novelty of the exercise he had just indulged in, the excessive heat of a scorching sun, neutralized, on this occasion, his inventive powers, while the wholesome dread he entertained of the Cardinal's wrath, whenever he encountered the slightest disappointment to his wishes, almost decided his faithful chaplain to renew the chase, particularly as the object of his pursuit was still in view, and, at this critical moment, the brethren of the Propaganda, walking three abreast, in their dark flowing costume, came up to where he stood.

Their vigorous pace, and young athletic forms, decided his Eminence's fat chaplain, and, with flushed cheeks and gasping breath, he returned their lowly obeisance, soliciting their aid, at the same time, to overtake the monk before them, who had "insulted his master, Cardinal Fortuni, on the pathway, a few moments since."

Three of the robust noviciates, at a signal from the missionary in charge of this formidable brigade, flew past the exhausted chaplain, like arrows from an unbent bow; the space between them and the monk was soon flown over, and the fat gentleman in the shovel hat hastened on as rapidly as his plethoric habits would permit, to rebuke and instruct this rude monk how, in future, he should humbly salute, and deferentially give place to, that rare phenomenon, a Cardinal, that may be a future Pope, taking (in his Eminence's great humility) "walking exercise."

The lecture, however kindly meant, was, for the present, declined by the Churchman in the cowl, by coolly and abruptly refusing the Propaganda Envoys either to retrace his steps, and crave Cardinal Fortuni's pardon, or await his Eminence's chaplain, and convey, through that Reverend Gentleman, his hearty contrition for so grievously offending that high dignitary and pillar of the Church.

"He refuses to ask his Eminence's pardon," cried the elder novice, on his return to the chaplain. "He told us, in a very haughty tone, 'Where no offence was committed, no pardon should be asked,' and walked on faster than ever. I did not see his face rightly; but his step is more that of a soldier than of a monk."

The missionary in charge of the noviciates quietly asked, "What religious order does he belong to?"

"He wore the dress of a Capuchin, and his cowl, holy Father, considering the heat of the day, was too much drawn over his face." The pupil and master exchanged an expressive glance.

"Rudillo," said the missionary to a tall youth who stood behind him, "few can outstrip you in the race;

keep this surly monk in view ; let him not be aware that you are watching his movements, and be able to report to me the object of his rapid walk in the Campagna, and its termination."

Rudillo touched his close-fitting cap almost reverentially, and flew, rather than ran, in the direction the monk had taken ; the missionary kept his eyes steadily fixed on his pupil's receding figure ; gradually, Rudillo's pace slackened, slower and slower it became, until he seemed merely to idly lounge in the warm sunbeams.

"To-morrow, good Father," said the missionary, calmly, turning to Cardinal Fortuni's chaplain, "in the Via del Gesu, you shall hear for his Eminence more of this audacious monk, until then, farewell, present my humble duty to his Highness, Cardinal Fortuni, and assure his Eminence nothing shall be wanting, on my part, to bring to chastisement the offender who insulted his august person."

With much ceremony the Priests separated, while the noviciate Propagandists resumed their walk, in parties of three, disputing points of casuistry, while their bodies were invigorated by the mountain breezes of Tivoli, thus mentally, and physically trained, into hardy, vigorous men, inured to fatigue, and subject to severe discipline, well fitted for active service in the cause of Mother Church in every hemisphere, and in every emergency, no matter how perilous.

CHAPTER VI.

The Roman Senate! where the Patriot's zeal
 Each selfish thought subdued for public weal,
 Where Regulus, devoted victim, stood,
 Self immolated for his country's good,—
 And taught them to prefer a spotless fame,
 A death of torture, to a life of shame,—
 Where now are fled the high, and glorious band,
 Majestic pillars of the freeman's land?
 Now abject slaves, these halls degraded fill,
 Vile tools, and echo of a Bigot's will:
 And Priests now sway, with superstitious charm,
 The sceptre held by Cæsar's conquering arm.

ROME.

IN the the groves of the Villa Mardoni, the novice Rudillo lost sight of the Capuchin monk.

After the latter entered the grounds, for the first time he perceived he was closely watched by the young Propagandist; and suddenly turning into a thickly planted alley, he entered a small Temple, rich in frescoes and statuary, whilst Rudillo stealthily followed, making a circuit, to discover was there more than one aperture, which, after ascertaining to his satisfaction, he then, concealing himself under some luxurious olives, kept an untiring watch on the little edifice, but its occupant seemed in no hurry to leave it, and the shades of evening began slowly to fall, before Rudillo crept from his concealment, and, like a wary enemy, reconnoitering a hostile entrenchment, advanced cautiously towards the Temple, peeped in and around it, and, to his no small dismay, found it unoccupied; he then examined every

compartment of this fantastic building. It was octangular in form, had no entrance into the interior, save the Portico through which he had seen the monk enter, and puzzled and perplexed, the young Propagandist sought in vain for a clue as to how the object of his vigilant watch had managed his departure.

There were statues placed in four niches, each of these he now scrutinized, in the hope of discovering some mode of exit, but could find no trace of secret spring, or concealed egress, that would solve the mystery of the monk's disappearance, and a vague feeling of terror stole over the mind of Rudillo, who was naturally superstitious, as he coupled the Capuchin's haughty irreverence for Cardinal Fortuni, and his marvellous escape from a place he had himself watched so closely. Hastily making the sign of the cross on his brow, and muttering an *Ave Maria* to the Virgin, for protection from the Evil One, the young Propagandist quitted the grounds, and lost no time in reporting himself in the Piazza di Spagna, when his ghostly confessor prescribed for the strengthening of his nervous system a course of reading and penance, well calculated to render him an unbeliever in "marvellous illusions" for the rest of his life.

In the mean time, the Capuchin monk, who had so adroitly escaped his vigilance, by merely quitting the Temple a moment after he entered it, as soon as he perceived the Propagandist spy making a *détour* in its rear, so as necessarily to withdraw his watchful eye from the Portico, the monk slipped behind a pillar, ready to make his escape, by plunging in the thickly planted groves of Ilex, that grew near, as soon as he perceived his enemy had removed out of sight, then stepping noiselessly, but rapidly along, with the air of one familiar with the close covert paths of the beautiful and wooded grounds, he paused not until he reached a grove of dark luxuriant myrtle, that fronted the western terrace of the Villa Mardoni.

Here he stood, as if irresolute for some moments, his

dark eye dilated, with the intensity of its gaze, on a female figure, reclining on a couch, half hid behind the columns of the noble Piazza, at whose further end was a fountain in full play, designed after that of the *Fountana Trevi*, its large vaulted niche crowded with architectural ornament, each side embellished with statues and columns of the purest Corinthian order, while in the centre stood the God of the Ocean, in his triumphal car, a colossal shell; his sea horses, guided by Tritons, pawed the lucid wave, while Neptune, with the majesty of a sea king on his brow, seemed in the very act of commanding the waters to flow. Out gushes the bright copious stream, from under the car on which the sea God stands, its clear sparkling waters rushing tumultuously from basin to basin, midst groups of Dolphins, rocks, and exquisitely designed marine plants, sculptured from the finest marble.

The cool refreshing air diffused by the Fountain, perfumed from groves of the orange and citron—the dreamy soothing gush of the transparent waters—the distant view of the glorious mountains that bound the Campagna—with the cloudless blue of an Italian sky, seemed to have lulled the only occupant of the Piazza into a state of half conscious meditative repose, rudely broken through by the sudden apparition of a Capuchin Monk, standing beside her.

“Luigi di Cartona!” exclaimed the young girl, bounding to her feet, as if her suspended faculties had been awakened by the sudden shock of electricity. “You at Rome! in the Villa Mardoni! Do I dream?”

“No, Seraphine,” replied the young man, in a tone subdued by inward emotion, “Luigi di Cortona braved death, and worse than death, the triumph of his bigoted persecutors, to kneel once more before you, to hear from your own beloved lips that the calumny of his enemies has not robbed him of what he valued most on earth, the unchanged love of Seraphine Mardoni.”

The young man flung himself passionately at her feet, while he impatiently threw back the monk’s cowl from

his head and face, revealing a brow lofty in its classical beauty, with features a young Apollo might have been modelled from, while he fixed his dark expressive eyes, full of sorrow and emotion, on the beautiful and *mobile* countenance of the graceful Italian girl, to whose robe he clung.

"Luigi!" cried she wildly, "they denounced you as a traitor, I did not then give you up, when you fought with Garibaldi, to establish a republic at Rome, abhorrent as such a mad scheme was to my feelings, outraged as I, a true Catholic, felt, at having the head of our holy Church, Christ's Vicar-General on Earth, driven, in a lackey's livery, out of his palace and city, by the horde of brigands, and Carbonari, whom you joined; I still was true to you, Luigi, my first and only love; but you are now," she said, in a voice broken by emotion, while she impatiently extricated her robe from his grasp, "a renegade from the true faith, a believer in the Heretic creed of Savonoralo, the Luther of Italy—proscribed—anathematized. Luigi di Cortona, I love you no longer. Hear me!" she exclaimed impatiently, as her lover was about to interrupt her. "I have vowed before the Bambino, the Infant Jesus, in the holy Church of Santa Maria d'Ara Cali, that I would tear you from my heart, that I would henceforth trample in the dust the memory of our childhood, the love of our riper years—yes, Luigi, break asunder for ever the tie that once bound us, and devote myself to whatever penance the Church inflicts, so that you may again be received into her bosom. Return, oh! return," she cried passionately, "to the true fold, burn those soul-destroying Scriptures, that have led you astray; seek the guidance of our infallible Church, confess your deadly error to some holy Father, and by penance and mortification, make atonement for mortal sin, such as you have committed, in setting up the right of private judgment against the decrees of a Church, which cannot err."

"Seraphine," cried the young man, starting to his feet, while he folded his arms with calm dignity, "I

have loved as few ever loved ; you were the dream of my childhood ; I do not remember the time, Seraphine, my soul was not linked to yours, but I feel within me that I am still a Roman, a recreant to the sacred cause of liberty. Would you not despise me ? The day of Italy's regeneration is not passed," he added, proudly, "she will yet arise from her ashes, and a people's cry for freedom must be heard : the servile superstition which insults alike God and man, shall be torn from its foul, unholy altar, and the word of the Almighty no longer be a sealed book. French bayonets shall not always guard the Vatican," he added bitterly, "and the time is not distant, when the watchword, Reform, will hurl the despot from his throne, and restore to a priest-ridden nation the freedom of our forefathers."

"Leave me !" cried Seraphine Mardoni, indignantly ; "insult me not by such blasphemy ; know you not, wretched man, that there is a price set on your head ? the rites of the Church are denied to all who may conceal or assist you ? Holy Mother of Heaven !" exclaimed the young girl passionately, clasping her hands fervently together, "forsake me not in this great strait ; let not earthly affection bind me to save that which God, by the mouth of his Church, has cursed."

"Seraphine !" returned Luigi, fixing on her a look of mingled love and pity, "you have been my affianced wife ; give me up, if you will, to the cruel malice of remorseless men ; let the dungeons of the Castle of St. Angelo be my tomb, as they are those of many a brave Roman, who has perished in the cause of truth. You have only to summon your domestics ; one of the Brothers of the Propaganda is already on my track, lurking in the groves yonder, or, as it may be, a witness to this interview, but I shall not deceive you, I am no longer the slave of that masterpiece of Satan, the Papacy ; the aim and object of my life shall be, to snap asunder the chain that binds Italy, glorious Italy ! in the dust, prostrate at the foot of Priestly tyranny ; to place her among the nations, no longer debased by ignorance and super-

stitution, but a first-class power, as the Italy of our forefather's day ; an unshackled press, to educate her people, not by symbol and sign," he continued, "but by the word of Eternal Truth, revealed by God himself, for the guidance of sinful man, is the magic blow struck for accomplishing this great work ; and you ask me to extinguish, at its birth, the first gleam of freedom for my country ! to burn the Scriptures of Truth ! Ah ! Seraphine !" continued the young man, sadly, "ask your own heart, what have those who prohibit the use of God's Word done for our beautiful land. The best and noblest are banished, and proscribed ; foreign troops guard our city gates ; Priestly spies watch over the secret thoughts of every household, ready to drag to the dungeon, or the stake, all who oppose their will, without even the mockery of a trial. Surely, Seraphine," he cried, as he attempted to take her hand, while his dark eye flashed with the spirit of ancient Rome, "the hour has come for Young Italy to arise ; our country's resources swallowed up by lazy Churchmen, our people poverty-stricken and debased, an imbecile and bankrupt government, backed up by foreign troops, without commerce in our ports, or freedom in our press, shall I, Luigi di Cortona, with the blood of the brave and free in my veins, grovel to Priestcraft, live and die, morally and physically—a coward and a slave ?"

"Spare me !" cried Seraphine, in a voice of anguish, as she covered her face with both hands, and leant against one of the pillars of the Piazza for support. "Spare me, Luigi, the dreadful sin of being carried away by the eloquence of man, to sanction for one moment sentiments such as our holy Church pronounces heretical and accursed ; fly for your own safety as well as mine, and raise not within me doubts, to destroy for ever my future peace."

"Seraphine," cried the young man in a voice of thrilling tenderness, while he clasped her hand fervently between his own, "I could die to ensure your happiness, and I know you better, my beloved, than you know yourself. As

the slave of superstition, you never can know that peace which passeth understanding, nor taste that freedom which eternal truth alone imparts. I do not ask you," he added, as she was about to speak, "hastily, and at once, to adopt my opinions, but I ask you, as one of God's most gifted creatures, with intellectual powers education could mystify, but could not destroy, to investigate for yourself, to weigh the soundness of that Church that allows the reading of the Koran, but forbids the study of the Word of God. Fly with me, then, to England, the land of your mother's birth, the land of the free! We have been brought up as brother and sister, Seraphine; as a brother, I will guard and watch over you until you are under the protection of a noble English woman, who will receive you as a daughter, and then I will claim you, my own Seraphine, as my long promised bride. Your father holds at least my political opinions, and will not withhold his forgiveness for a union he himself first planned when we were children. Speak, Seraphine, my beloved," he cried, as he folded his arms round her motionless figure, "tell me you are mine, and before a week elapses, with God's blessing, I shall meet you at Leghorn, to embark for England, our future happy home, until our own Italy is free."

With a desperate effort, Seraphine Mardoni extricated herself from her lover's arms. Her face was pale as the marble column against which she leaned; her dark luminous eye looked wild and unsettled; the inward struggle had been as the hurricane, but her exterior was unusually calm, as she said:

"The delusion of Satan is past, thanks to thee, blessed Mother of Heaven," she added, lifting her eyes fervently towards the blue clear vault before her; "the believing child has been punished for the heresy of her mother; she has listened to the arguments of her earthly lover, and doubted the power of the one true infallible Church, while his voice sounded in her ears. Luigi di Cortona!" she cried passionately, "we must part here, on this very spot—part for ever. I feel within me that I should

perish eternally, were I to listen to your arguments. The power you exercise over me is that of the demon over his possessed victim. I conjure you, by the virgin queen of Heaven, to depart, Luigi, and for ever. Those who fall, as you have done, into the deadly sin of judging for yourself what is right, never repent—never are forgiven by that holy Church, whose power is to loose and bind on Earth as well as in Heaven.”

The young man laughed scornfully.

“Infidel Heretic!” exclaimed Seraphine, regarding her lover with a look of mingled horror and agony, “leave me, or the Power you despise shall be evoked to remove such blasphemous heresy from again engrafting its plague spot on the heart of the lost creature, whose sin has been to love you to madness.”

“Yes,” cried the young man bitterly, “and in the hour she first told me so, would sacrifice my heart’s best affections for a decorated Phantom—a would-be infallible Church, whose vaunted power is lying miracles, whose most convincing arguments are the rack and the wheel; evoke that power, if you will, Signora Mardoni, I defy it;” and Luigi di Cortona proudly drew up his figure to its full height, while he fixed on the rigid countenance of the victim of superstition before him a look of lofty indignation. “Italy,” he exclaimed, “has still free hearts within her; and tell your confessor, Seraphine,” he added haughtily, “that the proscribed, anathematized Luigi di Cortona, with liberty his watchword, walks the length and breadth of his trodden down Italy, in bold defiance of Pope, Cardinal, or Jesuit, without one fear of being betrayed.”

The young man rushed from the Piazza without casting another glance on her who had so cruelly spurned his love for the dogmas of a faith which denounced “Young Italy,” gasping to be free, as blasphemous and heretical.

CHAPTER VII.

Perish, perish, the Amphibious power
 Which is the prolific seed of our evils !
 'Tis the law of the word of the Almighty,
 Which that power obscures with a mist of error.
 Radiant with its native light,
 May it unite afresh mind with heart,
 As long as ever that servile superstition,
 Which insults alike man and God,
 Shall not have fallen to the ground.
 From its foul, unholy altar,
 We swear, we swear on the sword,
 Either Death or Liberty.

ODE BY ROSETTI.

LUIGI di Cortona shared, in common with many of the young *noblesse* of Romagna, the most ardent aspirations after liberty—to free his country from the despotic tyranny of a slavish superstition—to give to her people the right of private judgment, freedom from religious persecution—and, by a republican form of government, to develop the resources of the Legations ; and Romagna he had written in words of fire, and fought with the desperate bravery of the *Gracchi*. But the small and gallant band were dispersed, though not overcome, by an army of foreigners, boasting of liberty, yet not blushing to be the active instruments of an usurping and despotic power—strangling Freedom in its cradle, and burying beneath the pomp of Papal ceremony, and the roar of French artillery, “the murdered nurseling,” in the dungeons of the Inquisition.

The middle classes, which comprise so much of the intelligence and virtue of every country, panted still

more eagerly than the young *noblesse* of Italy to free their land from the intolerable load of lazy Churchmen, who eat up the fruits of their industry, and, by the most narrow-minded policy, reduced the Roman States into a state of commercial bankruptcy; opposing the introduction of an extended scale of commerce, by the formation of railways, or steam navigation, in the Papal ports; while the censorship of the press, entirely confided to Jesuit control, precluded the publication or discussion of that sweeping reform in Church and State, so eagerly sought after by every class of the community; the lower orders, still more vehemently than the upper classes, inveighing against the grinding tyranny of Ecclesiastical rule, that condemned them to a hopeless state of ignorance and poverty.

These revolutionary sentiments, the father of Seraphine Mardoni entertained secretly; for the rich banker's life had been spent in the accumulation of wealth, and he was slow in joining openly any popular outbreak that would compromise his position with the existing government of the country, or prejudice the large fortune he had already amassed. Late in life he married an Englishwoman, of extraordinary beauty, whom he had met with when negotiating some commercial business in Paris; his wife conformed to Romanism outwardly, but her Confessor soon discovered the knee only bent "in the house of Rimmon;" the wealthy Banker's influence saved the woman he sincerely loved from, at least, open persecution, and he compounded for the mother's safety by giving up their only child, the beautiful and intelligent Seraphine, to be educated and brought up entirely under the guidance of the Jesuits, though residing under the same roof as her weak, but attached mother, whom she was early taught to regard as a doomed and incorrigible heretic, while the fond parent submitted, with silent acquiescence, to the hard terms imposed by her Jesuit Confessor, to prevent a total separation from her only child, an alternative sure to follow any interference on her part in the religious education of her daughter.

In the Jesuits' eagerness, however, to secure Seraphine's devotion to the Church of Rome, they quite overlooked the spiritual danger of Luigi di Cortona, in being daily subject to the influence of a woman, who, in her heart, believed the Holy Scriptures to be the only unerring guide of man. The pensive beauty, and extreme sweetness of disposition of his guardian's wife, early attracted the manly boy's affections, who, in his infancy, by death was deprived of a mother's care; and the Signora, in return, bestowed on the young orphan the instruction and motherly kindness her own child, by Priestly interference, was prohibited from receiving from a devoted Parent; so that Luigi early imbibed a love for religious toleration, and freedom of opinion, exercising the right of private judgment denied to his playfellow Seraphine, whose father designed should be the future wife of the young noble committed to his guardianship, by the will of Luigi's surviving parent.

The young people loved each other from childhood, with an affection that grew with their growth, increased, perhaps, by the restraint Seraphine was subject to from her earliest years, of disguising, where she could not control her feelings, thus piquing Luigi's curiosity as well as love, in discovering her real sentiments. While the girlish Seraphine felt towards her young lover the most unbounded admiration and attachment, she affected a coldness of manner, he, at times, deplored as indifference, so that, in his heart, there was wanting that confiding conviction that he was truly loved, which, however necessary to establish a lasting union between two hearts, was not calculated to slacken the attentions of an Italian lover, and Seraphine had exercised over hers an almost unbounded control.

The death of her mother cast the first shadow on Seraphine's influence over Luigi; he then remonstrated on the cruelty of a child deserting a parent's death-bed, and questioned boldly the authority of the Jesuit father, who forbid all intercourse between the dying mother and her only child. Seraphine indignantly resented her

lover's interference, and steadfastly adhered to her Confessor's injunctions, refusing to the last an interview with her parent, though placed by her ghostly adviser within hearing of that mother's cry of "Seraphine! Seraphine! my beloved child, will they not let me see you once again before I die?"

The last request was denied, and the agonised Seraphine knelt before a picture of "the Virgin Mother," within hearing of her own mother's last and touching prayer, for "the child who had deserted her." Faintly making an effort to soothe the bitter agony of that awful hour, the tortured victim turned her imploring gaze from the insensate picture before her, to the living countenance of her spiritual director, who stood unmoved at her side; but the cold, vigorous eye of Father Ignatius conveyed no sympathy to the palestricken daughter, whose heart yearned at that moment to receive a dying mother's blessing; and a slight repulsive movement of the Jesuit's lip, without word, or sound, was sufficient to quell the outpourings of a child's sorrow; and with a groan of contrite submission to her ghostly tyrant's will, Seraphine bowed her head before her Church's representation of "maternal love," to listen, calm and motionless, to the expiring death throes of the gentle, loving being who had given her birth.

Surely, Ignatius Loyola, thine is a creed, admirably and cunningly devised, to mortify and subjugate the noblest and best affections of our nature, and by the "discipline of suffering," render them subservient to the dominant power of a cruel and remorseless bigotry.

CHAPTER VIII.

Malice masked, and with shaven crown,
Has divided thee—betrayed thee—sold thee.

ROSETTI.

What though the haughty front of crime
Heaven's vengeance strikes not—from on high
It marks him—watches—waits the time,
And sleepless, lurks for life's last sigh.

MANZONI.

IT is not yet high noon, as the gilded coach of Cardinal Fortuni rattled along that matchless street, the Corso ; his Eminence is not stirring at that early hour, but his faithful Chaplain, big with the importance of his mission, sits in solitary grandeur within the ponderous vehicle ; it turns up the Via del Gesu, and stops in front of that vast and gloomy building, where Loyola died, and where his disciples legislate for the furtherance of their order and faith, in every known country of the world.

We shall leave the fat Chaplain waiting in suspense for some moments, as to the name and identity of the insolent monk that deprived his august master of rest, the night before, in not yielding the day previous, in the Campagna, the pathway to his Eminentissimo, or saluting, with due formality, a Cardinal priest, who claimed to be a Sovereign, and follow the Propagandist Missionary, who had appointed a meeting at this head quarters of the Jesuits, but had arrived much earlier than the Cardinal's envoy.

Like an *habitué*, he now trod those noble and vast galleries that intersect the building, so judiciously ventilated as to render them cool, and from their extreme cleanli-

ness, wholesome in the midst of *malaria*, and with the thermometer standing at the highest temperature.

Numbers of the Holy Fathers passed to and fro, on their daily mission to their appointed districts, in and about Rome, to exercise the rights of the confessional, confirm the wavering, visit the sick, and assist in the disposition of the property of the dying, as well as report the success of their labours, diurnally, to the head of their order.

Others were leaving for foreign lands, to spread and propagate a power that has ruled Cabinets, undermined Empires, and upset free institutions, in every civilised country which received such subtle and dangerous visitors. Who could have thought those quiet, demure-looking men, in their simple, unpretending uniform, a long, loose black dress, and close-fitting skull-cap, were a vast, organised, and powerful police, preserving a strict *surveillance* from the peasant's lowly fireside to the secret council of princes, among the nations of the terrestrial globe, connecting, as it were, by the magnetic wire of their order, the political and religious movement of different hemispheres, with their own invisible head, sitting in the Via del Gesu, at Rome? The pulse of mankind was within that man's grasp, so rigid was the discipline enforced on the Brethren, of reporting to him the minutest circumstance that could tend to advance or militate against the interests of a church they were sworn to serve, even by the commission of the most flagrant and revolting crimes.

The enquiry, now, of the Propagandist Missionary, was at once promptly and civilly attended to, and he was conducted, by a Jesuit brother, to a gallery, where each visiting Jesuit's name was under the peculiar district allotted that day for his inspection and care. Without glancing at these ticketed notices, the brother passed rapidly along, until he reached a door at the further end of the gallery : here he gave a low, peculiar knock, and by some machinery inside, the door seemed to open of itself, while the attendant brother, touching his cap deferen-

tially, closed the door of the small chamber his companion had just entered.

The Propagandist moved to the upper end of the room, and feeling for the handle of a bell, hid behind the fretted carving of a low, gothic doorway, rung it, once, twice, and thrice, when the door slowly opened, and he found himself in the presence of Monsignor Reynard, or, as our readers have known him, Father Ignatius, who wielded a power second only to one in that marvellous establishment.

After a formal greeting, the Propagandist detailed the most trivial circumstance connected with Cardinal Fortuni's *rencontre* of the day before, stating the whole in language as clear and as concise as possible. Monsignor Reynard at once turned to the Brethrens' report of the preceeding day, and selecting the district in which the Villa Mardoni was situated, he rapidly glanced over its pages, until his eye rested on the name "Signora Seraphine Mardoni."

"Sudden illness," he read, as if to himself. "Would see no physician." "Removed last night to the Nuns of the Trinita di Monti." "The illness that consults no leech, is the mind's disorder," said the Jesuit Father, musingly.

"You say this strange monk had the step of a soldier?" he added, turning his searching eye on the face of his companion.

"Even so, Monsignor," returned the Propagandist, "such was reported to me, and so I am sure the Cardinal himself thought, or he would not have followed up this matter, unless he suspected the monk's cowl disguised a disbanded soldier of Garibaldi's."

"He is too dull for such a close guess," remarked the Jesuit, in a caustic tone; "the Cardinal was only jealous that his full blown dignity, coming back in triumph from Gaeta, should not be recognised by some low Republican monk: let his Eminence know," continued this dissector of human nature, in a formal tone, that all due enquiry has been made for the present, without any satisfactory

result, but that he may expect the monk's name shall be duly reported to his Eminence. In the mean time you can hint to his chaplain, the less that is said on the subject the better; the matter," he added significantly, "must be allowed to drop."

With a wave of his hand, he motioned to a door opposite from that his companion entered, and the Propagandist brother bowing profoundly, retired through it, to make way for some one of the many who sought an audience that morning.

Shortly after, the gilded coach rumbled slowly back along the Corso, and his Eminence, Cardinal Fortuni, improved his digestion, by listening to a mystified report from his baffled chaplain.

That evening, after the close of the Vesper Hymn, in the Church of Trinita di Monti, the muffled figure of a female penitent knelt in the confessional, before Father Ignatius; the secret that placed her lover's life at his disposal she vainly attempted to conceal, and for this infringement of the Church's rights, Seraphine Mardoni was condemned to a penance, that colored her future life; the young, beautiful, and gifted heiress of the wealthy banker, became an inmate, *en retraite*, of the Holy Sisterhood of the Trinita di Monti, and was, by the direction of her ghostly adviser, subjected to a severe course of mental training in various sciences, imparted to her by a Jesuit Father, well versed in German metaphysics; and the over-wrought, broken hearted Seraphine, eagerly plunged into all the marvellous mystery of Animal Magnetism, and Electro-Biology, as a temporary relief to the anguish that, like a canker worm, preyed on her solitary moments, when forbidden thoughts would recall the memory of her mother's dying hour, and the uncertain fate of Luigi di Cortona, whose image, no matter how exorcised, still reigned paramount in her heart.

Early in the morning, when the Church of Trinita di Monti opened to receive its matinal worshippers, might the wretched Seraphine be seen kneeling in a side Chapel,


before that master-piece of Daniele de Volterra, "The Descent from the Cross."

Nearly as insensible as the fainting virgin, represented by the matchless artist as lying prostrate before the crucified Saviour, did Seraphine gaze on the countenance of the favorite disciple, and trace in the beatified expression of inspiration and hope, so wondrously portrayed, a fanciful likeness to her own enthusiastic lover, and dream and pray for the banished one's safety, while her distorted imagination strangely identified the hapless Luigi with the glorious painting she never tired of contemplating.

But the confessional has no secrets, and Seraphine's heart was, as it were, laid bare before the inquisitorial eye of Monsignor Reynard. Her father had long seen all opposition to his daughter's avowed intention of entering the Church as a Sister of Mercy would prove worse than useless, and after her sudden removal to the Nuns of Trinita di Monti, appealed to his child's feelings in the most affecting terms, not to give up for ever her only surviving parent, but to hope for better times, when the animosity of parties, in some degree, would subside, and through his influence and position he might succeed in making terms for the return of Luigi, to whom the good-natured banker was much attached.

Seraphine listened passively, but she knew the power of the Jesuits better than her father, and looked on the Church's pardon for such an avowed heretic as her lover chimerical, and equally so winning back to a faith he had doubted and abjured, the firm and investigating mind of Luigi di Cortona. The cloister then seemed her only refuge, and once a professed Nun, the wretched girl hoped her mental sufferings might, in some degree, be alleviated, and when openly united to a spiritual spouse, by fasting and penance, banish for ever from her heart all remembrance of her ill-fated earthly love.

"Signora Mardoni, I have been lately thinking much about you," said Monsignor Reynard, in one of his evening visits to his penitent.



"On some, the blessed Mary," he continued, "bestows gifts and graces denied to others, and just now, when I distinguished the thrilling melody of your *soprano* in the Vesper Hymn, I thought your services in the gay frivolous world would advance the cause of our holy Church far more than behind a cloistered lattice."

Seraphine started, the skilful Jesuit had touched the right chord, such a mind as her's shrunk apathetically from the monotonous repose so boastfully enjoyed by the Holy Sisterhood; the excitement of action, daily, hourly action, such as canonised an Ursula or St. Bridget, was what her distempered fancy craved after; she wished to perform something that would give her a special claim to the favor of Heaven, and she felt her heart had been too bitterly wrung with disappointment and sorrow, to render the mere act of taking the veil, and giving up a world that had lost all charms for her, that "good work," or self sacrifice, the Church of Rome demands from her votaries, to exalt them among the privileged saints in the Papal Calendar. Seraphine, from her childhood, was made to covet this distinction, and she now expressed herself ready and willing to undertake any service, no matter how laborious and irksome, to obtain the glorious prize.

"First," said the Jesuit, in a severe tone, "wipe out, by penance and mortification, the sin of the past; repeat daily, seven times, the *Ave Maria*, thrice the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, at sunrise, at noon, and at sunset, to purge your heart from the vile idol that still lurks in its inmost recesses, that, if not expelled, would destroy your soul everlastingly; commence a *novena* to the immaculate Mary, and kneel only before her blessed image, and by contemplating the graces and perfections of the countenance of the Queen of Heaven, cleanse your soul from the base dross of earthly affection, and gird up your mind to do good service for that holy infallible Church, that has separated you for ever from the blasphemous heretic you so sinfully loved."

"Father," cried Seraphine, with a face pale as monu-

mental marble, "I will do as you desire ; but tell me, does Luigi still live ?"

"Yes," was the curt answer of the Jesuit.

Then after a pause, he added, "He lives, but is in the power of the Church, and on the magnitude of the good works you, Signora Mardoni, perform, in the service of the religion of Mary, depends our holy Church's clemency. Remember, he, and such as he, have scandalized and brought into contempt our blessed faith more than the open and avowed followers of Luther and Calvin, and by a supererogation of good works only can you hope to save the life of this sacrilegious Traitor."

A week after, Seraphine Mardoni left Italy, in company with two Sisters of Charity and a Jesuit Father : their destination was Paris.

the manor, well backed up by the three Miss Shuffells, spent a portion of each morning at the profitable employment of drilling and lecturing the matron and her pupils on these momentous matters.

The boys' school, their patroness contented herself with merely finding fault with, deputing to Dean Shuffell the task of setting matters right, according to the peculiar notions of the fair proprietress.

The Very Reverend Dean, who long had an eye on the schools, as a stepping-stone to his own promotion in the Church, by placing them under the National Board, with a Government in office pledged to bestow preferment only on its supporters, commenced a hostile movement on the master, a steady and conscientious supporter of the unmutated Word of God being taught daily in the school he superintended ; and knowing from experience that the consistent schoolmaster's opinions were more respected in the parish than those of their lax rector, the Dean of Grimly, to escape the odium of any direct interference with the well-known Protestant predilection of the enlightened members of Fosterton, engaged the services, as curate, of a vain self-opinionated young man, holding extreme Tractarian opinions ; and with this ready tool to work out his own designing views, the conscientious rector ostentatiously withdrew himself from any interference whatever in the management of the Fosterton schools.

But the Oxford divine, however willing to carry matters with a high hand, was checkmated by the schools being fortunately placed, some time before, under the wholesome control of the Church Education Society ; and the local secretary, a lady of uncompromising religious principles, attended daily, with note-book and pencil, to take down, in rapid short-hand, the absurd rhapsodies of the Rev. Mr. Burley, in his futile attempt to place the authority of the Church above that of the Scriptures, and enforce the observance of obsolete forms, and unprofitable ceremonies, on young people who were taught that the God they worshipped, "with all their heart,

and with all their soul, and with all their strength, dwelt not in Temples made with hands, but was a Spirit, to be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth."

It was ludicrous to observe the effect the presence of a reporter had on the nervous system of the Reverend Disciple of Newman and Pusey; the lady secretary avoided all discussion, and forbore making the slightest observation during the school lectures of the learned gentleman; but quietly, and silently, plied the pencil, in reporting, with much accuracy, every word he uttered. Irritated, and confused, at being subject to this novel and provoking kind of censorship, the exponent of "The Revelation of Antiquity," was sure to break down in the middle of his contradictory harangue respecting the infallible authority of the Church, in interpreting the Scripture, the divine teaching of Tradition, and the efficacy of crosses, lighted candles, and the images of Saints, to quicken the devotion of the faithful, and suit the development of the age.

However, his Bishop was of the Evangelical School; and the Tractarian Curate, with the revelations of the note-book staring him in the face, sometimes feared he had gone too far, and in an ambiguous phraseology, retracted his avowed belief of the moment before in the Creeds and Councils of what he termed "a Sister Church."

The children giggled, and laughed outright; their master, Mr. Gibbon, looked ominously grave; but the lady secretary, with an unmoved countenance, merely jotted down each absurdity as it was uttered.

Bursting with indignation, the "new minister" covered the failure of his propounded sophisms, by selecting the most stupid looking pupils, in the Boys school, for a puzzling, and harassing examination; but "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword," and with the use of this weapon, the school children of Fosterton from their infancy were familiar; and their pious Teachers stood now, silently by, praying for those simple ones "the teaching of that

spirit" that confoundeth the wise in their own craftiness.

Surely their prayer was heard, "For out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings, hast thou, Lord, ordained praise;" and the Rev. Mr. Burley, with the dominant look of a "new light" of the Anglican Church, fixed his irate eye on one of the lesser boys, who stood shivering at the prospect of being examined by so angry looking a pastor, with—

"Tell me, lad, is not a belief in Creeds, as ordered by the Church, necessary to salvation?"

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," answered the little man boldly.

"Do not answer me from Scripture," cried the reverend gentleman, frowning.

The child looked abashed, and was silent; an elder boy, who stood next him in the class, answered—

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation"—John, 1st chapter, and 24th verse. And the boy triumphantly glanced towards the note-book and pencil, to record this his humble testimony to the truth, while he gratefully responded to the approving smile of his master, whose eye rested complacently on his pupil.

"How stupid," cried the Oxford divine, "you hear another boy rebuked for answering from Scripture, and you then come out (with no question addressed to you), with a text not at all to the purpose; really," he added, turning to Mr. Gibbon, "your boys are shamefully disciplined, and sadly ignorant of the meaning of the English language. Here, I have put a question in distinct terms, and am answered at random with Scripture texts, like so many parrots."

"You will excuse me, Sir," said Mr. Gibbon, mildly, but firmly; "in differing from you entirely; both boys understood your question, 'Was not a belief in Creeds, as ordered by the Church, necessary to salvation?' and the first boy's answer very properly showed the Creed, or

Belief, God has revealed to his fallen creatures; the other boy answered in the words of Christ himself, the Belief, or Creed, that alone saves from condemnation; and I should have remarked before, Sir, to you," he added, as the angry Curate was about to interrupt him, "that I am in the habit of requiring from the boys a Scriptural answer, for 'the hope that is in them;' this makes one portion of God's word explain clearly another, and my pupils, like Timothy of old, have known from childhood the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make them, as the Apostle says, 'wise unto Salvation.' "

"You are extremely injudicious, Mr. Gibbon," returned the young Curate, "in your mode of teaching, in the words of that enlightened Tractarian Fronde, your 'trumpery principles about Scripture being the sole rule in *fundamentals*.' I nauseate the word. Scripture and Tradition," he added, dogmatically, "must go together as a joint rule of faith."

Poor Mr. Gibbon raised his hands and eyes in utter amazement; while he commenced an indignant refutation of so unscriptural a doctrine, cut short by his reverend antagonist telling him, "it was quite impossible to examine the children with such unseasonable and constant interruption;" and a glance from the schoolmaster's protectress, with the note-book and pencil, warned him to desist from further disquisition, and leave the advocate of Tradition to be answered by his Bible-taught pupils.

"Is an adherence to the Bible, and nothing but the Bible," asked the learned Oxford divine of the poor children before him, "an ungrateful rejection of another great gift, equally from God (I mean Tradition)?"

"To the law and the testimony," replied one of the elder boys; "if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them"—Isaiah, viii., 20.

"Scripture again," exclaimed the reverend examiner, impatiently. "I shall ask you the question once more," and he repeated it slowly.

The boy looked puzzled, but his countenance brightened up, as he answered rapidly, "Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect, by your tradition"—Matthew, xv., 6.

While a little fellow, at the lower end of the room, sang out—

"Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition," and the child turned over the leaves of his Bible, to discover the particular chapter from which he had quoted.

"Well remembered, Johnny," cried Mr. Gibbon, delighted at the apposite quotation from one of his younger pupils; "you can look up the reference, my man, some other time; you will find it in Mark, chapter vii., verse 9."

Johnny, highly delighted with his master's approval, shut up his book, while the examiner rebuked Mr. Gibbon severely, "for prompting the boys."

Before the poor man could reply, a boy's voice, from the extreme end of the room, was heard in a loud, clear tone—

"In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"—Matthew, xv., 9.

While the elder boy, who had first answered, said, slowly, with a glance of solemn horror towards the learned Oxford man—

"If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book"—Revelations, xxii., 18 and 19 verses.

"How many of you are to speak at a time?" cried the confounded Curate. "Those boys do not know their A B C in Church History, Mr. Gibbon; their Scripture lessons must be curtailed, and they must be instructed in the Rubric, and Articles of the Church, as interpreted by men of learning and piety. The root of the evil lies," he added, "in those children being so mistakingly instructed in those 'reserved truths,' the appointed ministers and stewards of God's mysteries should dispense to the people by symbol and sign."

"Go ye, and preach the gospel to all nations," is a

plain command," remarked the pious schoolmaster, emphatically ; "and I hope, Sir," he added respectfully, "that you will think the matter over, and not think of depriving those young people of the 'Written Word,' that is able to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished, unto all good works."

The Rev. Mr. Burley paused, as he glanced towards the poised pencil, ready to transcribe his answer in that small note-book, that, for aught he knew to the contrary, might be submitted to his Bishop.

"I can say nothing positive, until I examine the girls," he said, hastily ; "if they are only half as ignorant and as flippant as the boys, the sooner the schools are revised the better."

And out stalked the baffled Tractarian, secretly determined never again to encounter the pencil and note-book, and contenting himself with the reflection, that the doctrines of a mediæval age were not suited to the poor, whose chief study was a Bible, but to the wise and learned of the earth, who could discern a saving power in a lecturn and a credence-table, a fald-stool and an altar.

The reverend gentleman was right, for in our day is fulfilled the plain prophecy of Scripture—"They shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned into Fables"—2 Tim., iv., 4.

The Dean of Grimly, however, had a deeper stake at risk in the perversion of the Fosterton Schools, than his curate, and was, besides, a man possessing a strong tenacity of will in the furtherance of a favourite object, and, warned by his deputy's failure, he unhesitatingly advised a sweeping reform—so urgently required by that learned gentleman's exaggerated report—including the immediate dismissal of the efficient master, and his equally efficient wife, the mistress of the female school. To think and act were simultaneous with Mrs. Fosterton. The carriage was ordered, and, accompanied by the three Miss Shuffells, who, as usual, were in attendance at her morning levée, she drove to Fosterton, entered the

schools, where some hundreds of the rising Tenantry on her estate were receiving pious and useful instruction, and contemptuously dismissed their teachers, as incompetent; while she dispersed, *sans cérémonie*, the astonished scholars, thus depriving, without note or comment, of daily bread, a meritorious couple, who had served faithfully in their calling for years; and inflicting, besides, a grievous wrong on the poor, by snatching from them, thus arbitrarily, that greatest of all boons to the young, a sound, religious, and practical education.

As might be expected, the general murmurs were loud and deep, particularly as the schools, for the present, were shut up; and some independent ladies in the neighbourhood ventured to remonstrate on the subject, with Mrs. Fosterton, and ask an explanation of the charges preferred against the dismissed teachers, who heretofore were so universally respected. But such presumptuous interference, Dean Shuffell declared, was intolerable, and their visitor, Captain Gardner, considered the Church alone had authority to decide in school discipline and instruction, while he referred to, quoted, and apostrophised "the Dean of Grimly," as being the authorised judge of those matters in that parish, and Mrs. Fosterton's legitimate and accredited adviser.

The lady herself thought otherwise, for she knew him to be an unscrupulous flatterer, and worldly-minded man; but her pride was piqued, at the management of a school she called "her own" being called in question, and though conscience whispered that she had hastily done an act of gross injustice, the voice of the inward monitor was drowned by the sophistry of Captain Gardner, and the smooth flatteries of Dean Shuffell, who now, elate with so far succeeding in his plan of turning the schools into a subject of worry and annoyance to both Mr. and Mrs. Fosterton, felt certain of their future management being confided to his own guidance, while he commenced a diplomatic correspondence with the National Board of Education, artfully coquetting for the coveted mitre, and taking care, in the mean time, no

master or mistress could be found that would carry on the schools satisfactorily.

Perplexed and annoyed, Mrs. Fosterton tried to banish them from her thoughts, and her husband inwardly rejoiced at the prospect of their expense being put an end to ; while the independent party, who had advocated the claims of the unjustly discarded teachers, and their injured pupils, were treated, at the suggestion of the arrogant Dean, and his ally, with studied and supercilious neglect ; thus withdrawing from the proprietors of Fosterton Park the countenance and moral support of the upright and conscientious in their neighbourhood.

The religion of the Bible is the religion of independent freemen, and under the auspices of this party, the late master and mistress of the Fosterton Schools opened a day school in the village, and though pompously ordered to depart from thence by the Dean of Grimly, yet met effective support and patronage from the small farmers and shopkeepers, who gladly paid for their children's instruction from this pious couple, whose faithfulness these humble, but close observers, appreciated and esteemed.

As Haman regarded Mordecai did the Dean of Grimly look, each Sabbath day, on the smooth coat of Mr. Gibbon, the village schoolmaster, and his well regulated family, as they sat within view of the reading-desk, conspicuous for the neatness and decorum of their appearance, until, at length, the feeling began, in some degree, to be shared by Mrs. Fosterton, from her partially curtained pew ; why, she could not well explain, but hers was an impressionable nature ; and the three Miss Shuffells had a story each to tell, of the two Miss Gibbons, about their "pretension," and "demure impertinence in never raising their eyes when the Fosterton Park family came into church:" while the Dean professed his conviction that "Gibbon was a designing, dangerous man, in his heart a Dissenter, though he went to church, and in every way inimical to the extension of ecclesiastical authority."

The Rev. Mr. Burley, the curate, denounced him under various types and shadows from the pulpit, and in his zeal against Scriptural instruction, allowed the cloven hoof to peep rather too prominently from under the folds of the white surplice he preached in, by branching off into a warm eulogium on what he fancifully termed "St. Peter's Liturgy," known to the Protestant worshippers he addressed, as the "Mass-book," until he, at length, lost himself in a labyrinth of "daily services," "rood screens," and "altar cloths," that nearly cleared the church of Fosterton, leaving the Dean of Grimly and his family, with the clerk, to represent the congregation.

The Fostertons had left a day or two previously for Lord Drydale's; all their visitors had dispersed before they went from Fosterton, except Captain Gardner, who accompanied them as far as Dublin, where some of his friends in the ——— Guards were busily engaged, getting up Concerts, and an Opera, on a small scale, for some of the leading London artistes, who employed the leisure of a professional holiday in charming and enlightening the Provinces. so that the Rector of Fosterton had to encounter alone, without, at least, the personal aid of his friends, the obloquy incurred among his Parishioners, for countenancing and retaining his Tractarian curate.

The Dean of Grimly was intended by nature for the diplomatic line, and his heart never having been renewed by Divine Grace, the "old man," "which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," reigned undisturbed; on this occasion he temporised, explained, and even freely blamed, what he termed "the rash preaching of Mr. Burley;" his object was to gain time, and let the storm of indignation, raised by the unveiled Puseyism of his curate's injudicious *exposé*, subside of itself.

In retaining the Rev. Mr. Burley, he had a two-fold object in view; first, to pave the way, by revolutionising the Fosterton Schools, and disgusting their patrons, to throw them entirely into the power of the rector, and so strike his own bargain with a Government, who propped up, with all their influence, the National Board; and

secondly, he wished to be initiated into those attractive rites and forms so eulogised by the Fostertons, as observed in the Parish Church of their London residence; and the Dean of Grimly really saw no impropriety in converting the plain, substantial edifice at Fosterton into a mimic "Barnabas, or Paul."

His own tendencies were to extend, to its utmost limit, the power, temporal and spiritual, of the Church, of which already he was a dignitary, and of which he hoped *in futuro* to be a Bishop; but of the details of mediæval embellishment he was sadly ignorant, and as his curate was a *célébré* in that line, he thought it but reasonable to be allowed to avail himself of that gentleman's superior artistic taste, in abolishing the Pulpit Captain Gardner sneered at "as a convenient seat for the minister to read service in," and "the decent Communion table" Mrs. Fosterton deplored, by supplying their places with a "lecturn," and "altar," no where, to be sure, authorised in the Canons, or Book of Common Prayer, but, nevertheless, necessary, in Mrs. Fosterton's opinion, to give scope to those feelings of "awe, mystery, tenderness, and devotedness," her friend, Captain Gardner, assured her, were so indispensable in Catholic worship.

The fact was, the Dean of Grimly sadly loved the good things of this world, and his cover was duly laid by the butler at Fosterton Park, when the family were in the country; and his own finances were so crippled, by the failure of one or another expensive scheme to insure a prospective aggrandisement, that the *bon vivant clérico* seldom could indulge at home; besides, the Very Reverend Dean was a family man, and had ambitious match-making propensities for his three ugly grown-up daughters, and the three young ladies, equally ill-favoured, *en réserve* in the school-room, and the "monied interest," and "ministerial influence," were sure to be represented by bachelor cavaliers, *en attendant* at Fosterton Park.

"Propinquity makes Benedicts," said the facetious Dean to his spouse, "and the Fostertons must be induced

to live in their own country, and entertain their friends at this side of the water."

"During the week following his curate's *Newmanic* escapade, the sober coloured chariot of the deanery, that had been made to order for a defunct Bishop, might be seen going its rounds through the parish. Mrs. Shuffell and the three Miss Shuffells, in the course of their prolonged morning visiting, expressed the most unbounded astonishment, separately and collectively, at "the strange sermon of Mr. Burley," the preceding Sunday, and 'told many little anecdotes aptly illustrative of that gentleman's "absence of mind," in frequently "saying what he never meant;" while they dwelt with much emphasis on "the Dean's horror of Popery, and his refusing Mrs. Fosterton herself to have a naughty little Hymn to the Virgin sung in church, that Captain Gardner had composed and arranged to really a most delightful melody."

"The Dean of Grimly acted wisely," remarked a quiet God-fearing widow, whom they were anxious to impress favourably, being one of those whose opinions carried much weight with the right-minded in the neighbourhood. "Had he been guilty of such unfaithfulness," she added, coldly, but firmly, "as to dishonour God's worship, by a hymn of prayer and praise to a created being that partook of our sinful nature, the congregation, Mrs. Shuffell, in Fosterton Church, for the future, would be limited to the Dean of Grimly, his family, and curate. The clerk already has publicly declared his intention of resigning, should the ministration of Mr. Burley be continued."

The poor Dean himself was equally unsuccessful in his morning calls. He set out early in a practical spirit, on foot, and made a pilgrimage of inquiry through the parish, as to the state of public feeling, in continuing his curate.

Some he succeeded in partially cajoling to give "the young man a fair trial," which merely meant, in substance, affording this rampant Tractarian an opportunity of poisoning weak minds, by disseminating doctrines

"trading Reformation," while he was allowed to sit in "the Reformer's seat."

"Really," said Dean Shuffell, in the most friendly and candid manner, after a long conversation with one of his most intelligent and upright parishioners, who happened that year to be churchwarden, "there is no man living more opposed to Popery than I am, and I look upon those things as mere non-essentials, and harmless in their use: and after all," he continued, with a wise look at his companion, "setting up crosses may be the true method of counteracting Dissent, and as Christ was the 'light of the world,' two candles lighted on the altar could do no possible harm."

"I tell you what it is, Mr. Dean," returned the churchwarden firmly, "I am entirely of Bishop Latimer's opinion, when it was 'up with candles, it was down with Christ;' and if you or your curate attempt to place on the *Communion Table* of Fosterton Church, candles, lighted or unlighted, I shall exercise my right as churchwarden, and, in the face of the congregation, remove them with my own hand, and fling them outside the door."

The noble Liturgy of the Church of England, in its apostolic simplicity, was neither desecrated, nor its soul-edifying services neutralized and interrupted, by Tractarian "mummeries," in the parish church of Fosterton. Would it not have been well, if the heads of Oxford College had acted in the same spirit, protesters against the introduction of error, as this sturdy congregation and their fearless churchwarden? the Jesuit snake, Pusey & Co., would then have been "scotched," and "the plague had been stayed."

But, to return to the discomfited Dean; he wrote a long and elaborate epistle to Mrs. Fosterton, of the civil war broken out in his parish, by his curate advocating from the pulpit, "religious observances," and "points of practice," approved of by herself, winding up by declaring, in the most devoted terms, his steadfast adherence to whatever view she took of the matter, and his entire


submission to her guidance, in either parting or retaining the obnoxious Mr. Burley.

From his knowledge of the lady's known tendency to favour Puseyite opinions, as well as her spirited determination in carrying matters with a high hand against opposition, the wily Dean fully calculated on an imperative command from Mrs. Fosterton to leave matters as they were, and let the congregation return to their senses and their pews, under the ministry of an avowed Tractarian; but Captain Gardner was absent, and Mr. Fosterton, totally indifferent, laughed equally at the Dean of Grimly, his curate, and the refractory parishioners, turning the whole matter into jest and burlesque; while Lady Drydale, to whom her sister was tenderly attached, and whose opinion and her husband's Mrs. Fosterton respected, and was influenced, in a great measure, by, when they were together, advised her now strongly to urge on Dean Shuffell not to further give cause of offence in the parish, but to dismiss the injudicious young man, who had so wantonly caused such disorder and scandal among the congregation.

The advice was promptly acted on; but in the interim, Sunday came round, and Dean Shuffell, in happy ignorance of his fair patroness's *ukase*, resigned the Pulpit to his curate, and faced empty benches in the Parish Church, kept in countenance by his own family, and the firm conviction that he had adroitly shifted the responsibility of his act off his own shoulders, so as not to come personally to an open breach with his parishioners.

They, one and all, had taken themselves to the next parish, to sit under the faithful ministry of Mr. Warner; and his neat cheerful country church, with its modest spire rising towards Heaven, surrounded by pleasant groves, and meads, was filled to overflowing.

The touching, and beautiful service, was performed in the "Spirit of Prayer," and the united voices of the congregation rose up in rich and simple melody, to the throne of Him whose Temple are the hearts of His faithful people.



A pin drop might be heard in that densely crowded church, as the veteran servant of Christ ascended the Pulpit; every eye was fixed on the calm beloved face of their venerable Pastor, as he rose, after a short and earnest prayer, to "reprove," "rebuke," "exhort," the souls committed to his care.

The Text was St. Paul's deliberate and noble avowal of single and devoted service to his great Lord and Master—"I have determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

How admirably did the pious and gifted preacher expound the word of Eternal Life; how faithfully did he withdraw his hearers from the *externals* of religion, to "the vital principle of true godliness." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever."

How earnestly did he impress on them the necessity of that "Spiritual union," by faith with their risen Saviour, that could alone effectually guard them from the temptations of "the world, the flesh, and the Devil,"—that warfare every child of God must be engaged in, before he enters the promised land.

How fervently and beautifully did he pray, that they might be saved from the snare of the "Evil One," who entrappeth the children of men by "their own devices," "hewing themselves broken cisterns;" the worldly wisdom, and teaching of fallen man, with their backs turned towards the waters of Life, flowing freely for them from that Fountain of Eternal Truth, the revealed Word of the living God.

Surely "the Letter killeth, and the Spirit giveth Life," for paltry and insignificant did crosses, candlesticks, fald-stools, and altar-cloths, with the rest of mediæval paraphernalia, appear in the eyes of that congregation, when compared to the preaching of that glorious Gospel, an Apostle has said "Is hid only to them that are lost."

Thoroughly provoked did Dean Shuffell peruse Mrs. Fosterton's answer, dated from Ashworth, and bitterly did he deplore the waywardness of mind evinced by the writer, baffling his well digested scheme of obtaining per-

manent influence, by ministering so unreservedly to what he had good reason to suppose were her own fixed opinions; but he was left no alternative, and obey he must; so the Rev. Mr. Burley was furnished with "letters dismissory," and however reluctant that learned gentleman might be to resign his pulpit, yet without a congregation, it was hardly tenable, so the Dean of Grimly had to look out for another curate, and his late one, with the *éclat* attending his *début* at Fosterton, and a special case of persecution annexed, was no loser by the change.

A well known Tractarian Bishop in England, by accident, of course, was furnished with a full, and one-sided version of his disciple's expulsion, and in an incredibly short period, the Rev. Mr. Burley, was inducted into a rich and pleasant living, in one of the most populous districts of this discriminating Bishop's diocese.

CHAPTER X.

Whatever passes as a cloud between
The mental eye of faith and things unseen,
Causing that brighter world to disappear,
Or seem less lovely, and its hopes less dear,
'This is our World, our Idol, though it bear
Affection's impress, or devotion's air.

"I have got a ticket for the Italian Opera," cried Frank Lee, as he opened the door of his widowed mother's neat and cheerful little drawing room, on a fine autumnal evening, where she and her only daughter were seated at tea.

"And lost your dinner, Frank," exclaimed his sister Letty, looking up archly in her brother's animated face.

"We waited for you, Francis," observed his mother, gravely, "for nearly an hour beyond the usual time, but I suppose you haven't dined, and will want now something more substantial than tea?"

"Anything will do for me," returned the young man, throwing himself on a small lounge, near the window. "I have no appetite; and, in truth, mother, never thought of such a common-place thing as dining, all day. I am sorry I kept you waiting, but I had such a treat, 'a feast for the gods!'" he added, enthusiastically. "Think, Letty," he continued, addressing his sister, who had slipped out, and now returned with the slender fragments of their frugal dinner, "where I spent my day! actually behind the scenes, listening to a private rehearsal of that divine opera, *Somnambula*, with Mario, Grisi, and that glorious *prima donna*, Fanchetti, discoursing 'sweet sounds,' that would tempt 'an angel from its sphere.'"

Letty Lee laughed, as she remarked quietly, "No wonder, then, for you, Frank, to forget your dinner; such an ecstatic entertainment banished, of course, that vulgar sensation, hunger; but how did you contrive, Mr. Frank, to get into such goodly company?" she asked, with a slight touch of sarcasm in her voice.

"Aye, indeed," said Mrs. Lee, before her son could answer, while she poured out a cup of tea, and placed it near the plate and knife and fork Letty had just arranged; "what brought you, Francis," continued the old lady, "behind scenes, where vice wears a jewel on her sleeve, and the syren's voice is never raised to the praise and glory of her Maker?"

"Mother," said Frank Lee, rising from the couch, and placing a chair opposite the slight repast prepared for him, "that is a subject that you and I can never agree on, so perhaps it would be better to let the discussion of it alone, and let me discuss those good things I see here, with what appetite I may;" and the young man stood for a moment, and repeated, in a low voice, a short thanksgiving, while he commenced a feeble attack on the simple viands before him.

"Francis," said his mother, kindly, "you are eating nothing; I am afraid you are suffering from your old tormentor, that nervous head-ache."

"But slightly, mother," replied her son, as he looked into his parent's face, which was clouded with affectionate anxiety. "It is nothing," he added; "one of your good cups of tea, mother, will set me all right."

"Mother," cried his sister Letty, laughing, "if you would let Frank tell and talk of all he heard and saw, he would be soon much better; don't you see he is in a state of effervescence, and unless the spirit gets vent, his poor head will explode. Come, Frank, tell us all about it. You heard, I suppose, *incog.*, what you love most on earth, a good opera, sung to perfection, by first-class talent?"

"Just so, Letty," returned her brother, laughing, "but not *incog.* A young fellow, of whom I knew a little in College, is intimate with the officers of the ———

Dragoons; knowing my *penchant* for the theatre, as I met him in the train going in this morning, he brought me to the rehearsal, and introduced me to a friend of his, a man of unbounded musical talent, a Captain Gardner, who was wondrous kind, I assure you, presented me to Fanchetti, and made me sing that air from *Masaniello* that Mary Elmore admires so much."

"And the Signora admired too, as well as your 'deep contralto,'" added his sister laughing; "Eh! Mr. Frank, was not that it? No wonder for you to forget your dinner."

"But I hope you did not forget attending the young Aylmers and Richardsons?" observed Mrs. Lee, in a tone of anxious enquiry.

The look of elation vanished from her son's face, at the mention of his pupils. Frank Lee was silent, but as the parental eye that was fixed upon him half reproachfully demanded an answer, he said, hurriedly—

"The truth is best to be told: I never once thought of them, mother, until this moment."

Mrs. Lee looked grave. "Mr. Aylmer is very particular about his boys," she at length said, "and, of course, he is right to be so; lost time can never be recalled, and I do not think, Francis, the excuse of spending your morning with actresses and officers, would be received by him as a sufficient apology for neglecting his sons."

A bright hectic spot flushed for a moment on the pale cheek of Frank Lee, while his slight chiselled features wore an air of extreme mortification, but he replied not to the severest rebuke his loving and indulgent mother had uttered for years.

"Come, mother," cried her daughter, coaxingly, "you must not be too hard on Frank; he did not designedly neglect his duty to day, in forgetting his pupils, it was only caused by a bad memory."

Mrs. Lee shook her head, and a sly smile played round the corner of Letty's mouth, as she wisely shifted her ground of defence.

"You should remember, mother," she added, in a tone of remonstrance, "how hard he has been worked at his Divinity Lectures, and how pale and thin Mary Elmore thought him looking, when she came back from the North, and you agreed with her, that a little recreation now and again would do him a great deal of good."

"Yes," said Frank Lee, in a sarcastic tone, "my mother would allow me an odd stroll over Dalkey Hill, or a trip to Malahide Strand, but to prefer listening to the entrancing melody of the most accomplished vocalists of the day, rather than hammering Greek and Latin into the heads of half a dozen stupid urchins, is with her a crime not to be forgiven."

"You quite mistake me, Francis," observed his mother, hastily; "I am not such a devoted lover of music as you are, still I think, like every other 'good gift from above,' the excellence of the human voice, when exercised in God's praise, and for his glory, is a precious gift, greatly to be admired, and no doubt should be cherished and cultivated, but the perversion of this talent, like that of every other committed to our care, is a great and crying evil."

"There would be no Operas, mother, if you had your will," said Letty, laughing.

"I am no ascetic, Letty," returned Mrs. Lee, "nor would I neglect Music, as an art, no more than the study of Painting and Sculpture, but it should be cultivated under proper restriction, and not allowed to engross entirely the imagination and heart, unfitting its votaries for the every day duties of life."

"Letty will write an apology for me," said the young man carelessly, "and I can give the Aylmers and Richardsons a double task to-morrow, to make up for idling to-day."

"Every day should bring its own allotted work," remarked his well-regulated parent, whose own life was a pleasant round of punctually performed duties.

Her son's lip slightly curled, he had yet to learn the Apostle's injunction, "Be ye moderate in all things," and

his shrewd observant sister well understood the expression his mouth conveyed.

"You will yet be as enthusiastic about your parish, Frank, as you are now about a musical score, and then, as you grow grey, sober down into a practical man, cheerful and happy in the performance of commonplace every-day work."

Mrs. Lee had stood up to open her pretty French window, and enjoy the perfume of her little garden, after a slight autumnal shower; she paused as she passed near her son, and parting the dark luxuriant hair from a brow where the ideal was so visibly stamped, and regarding her child at the same time with eyes as dark and as expressive as his own, full of motherly love, she gently whispered, "Keep yourself, my son, from Idols."

"And here is Mary Elmore!" cried Letty, gaily, who was looking towards the window, as the little gate in front opened.

Both mother and son laughed, while the latter, with a heightened color, started up to open the Hall door, and Mrs. Lee, opening the window, greeted the pretty, graceful girl, who stepped lightly along the smooth gravel-walk that divided the widow's small *parterre* of autumn's gay flowers.

"You are just in time for tea, Mary," said the elder lady, kindly, as her young friend approached the window, "come in, and Letty will get some for you in a moment."

"I have had my tea this half-hour, thank you," said a clear, pleasant voice, "with a very noisy party, I assure you; all the children, old and young, I had quite to myself; Papa and Mrs. Elmore dined out."

"And what have you done with the little people now?" asked Mrs. Lee.

"Cribbed them," answered the young girl, laughing, "saw all their round, rosy cheeks on the pillow before I came away, with *Billy Winkey* perched on their eyes; in their little cots they looked like so many birds in a bower."

Mrs. Lee smiled, much amused, while Letty peeped over her mother's shoulder, as she said slyly—

"There is somebody waiting for your knock, Mary, but not a 'gold stick' in waiting."

Mary held up her hand playfully, and tried to look wicked at her witty friend, then turned at once to the Hall door, and gave a low double knock, which was acknowledged by Frank Lee opening it promptly; their hands and eyes met a mutual recognition of avowed affection.

"I am going, Mary," cried Frank, before they left the Hall, "to the Italian Opera, to-night, how I wish you were going! Such divine singing is worth an age of every day enjoyment."

"You know, Frank, I am not an enthusiastic musician," said Mary, blankly; "and beside, though I love good singing, the Italian Opera is too expensive for me; just think of my throwing away a pound, I may say, to listen to this hired talent, when I can hear you, Frank, sing quite as divinely without fee or reward."

"Except your loved smile, Mary," said Frank, gallantly, and the lovers entered the drawing room.

Shortly after, Frank retired to make his simple toilette, and set off in high spirits for the Italian Opera. Mary and Letty lost, that evening, their late walk on the cliff, while Mrs. Lee retired, with the painful feeling that the son she had watched and prayed over from his infancy, evinced an extravagant love for Dramatic representation, totally inconsistent with the choice of his destined profession.

After the good Lady retired to her chamber, her daughter, who occupied a bed in the same room, tried in vain to assuage her fears for the future. A mother's pre-sciences amounts nearly to the prophetic.

"Letty," she said, "it is in vain to try and persuade me that Frank's love of the Theatre entirely arises from his passion for Music—a passion, I admit at times, that seems to absorb all his other faculties. I was wrong, perhaps, in fostering it, as I did at first, by placing him,

before his voice broke, in the choir at Patricks ; but a salary of fifty pounds a-year, at that time, was a great matter to push the poor fatherless boy on, and so many boys began in the choir, and ended in the pulpit, and a Bishop even, to my own knowledge, that I did all for the best ;" and the poor anxious mother sighed deeply.

"Do not grieve so, mother," said her daughter kindly, "about Frank's going to the Theatre, or a Concert, whenever he can ; when he gets some country curacy, and is out of the way of temptation, he will soon lose the fancy, and be as sober minded as even you, mother, could wish."

"The human heart, Letty, is never beyond the reach of temptation," returned Mrs. Lee, as she commenced undressing, while her companion sat down quietly near a small table, and drew out her needle-work, as she was to sit up to let Frank in.

"I hope he will not be late," said her mother, as she arranged some matters on the shelf of her accurately kept wardrobe, "for sitting up will weary you, child, you are so unaccustomed to it, except lately ; indeed," she added, correcting herself, "Francis has kept you up watching for him pretty often."

"Oh !" returned Letty, carelessly, "he'll be in when it is all over, and not one moment later, for one good thing about Frank, mother, is, that he is never tempted by his gay companions to exceed in any way, and hates dissipation of all kinds."

"He is, indeed, a wonderfully correct young man," said his mother cheerfully, "brought up without a father's guiding hand over him, and left, I may say, his own master ; I never have had cause to blush for one of his acts."

"Oh, but you ruled him well, mother," cried Letty, laughing ; "and now I must rule you, for I see your manœuvre, my dear madam, to wile away time until you see your pet after he comes in, but that will never do," she added playfully, "to bed you must go."

"Now, Letty, you are always saying Francis is my pet, and, indeed, he is not; I never made the slightest difference between my children. Neither he, nor my darling child who is Heaven, were ever preferred before you Letty; but I was afraid you would be lonely, sitting up by yourself, and I do not feel sleepy."

"I never will miss your company, mother," said Letty, gaily. "While I have a petticoat, three caps, and an apron, to make for your old pensioner, lame Molly, I can neither be idle nor lonely, and the Opera will not be over until it is late, and then, Frank has to walk out nearly four miles, for the last train will have started long before he can leave Dublin."

Mrs. Lee's little plan of waiting for her son she saw clearly must be given up, and Letty stood up and settled her mother's old-fashioned arm-chair near the table, and took a large book off a shelf, which she placed before herself, and, with her parent seated opposite, commenced reading a portion of Scripture that she knew would strengthen and soothe her beloved parent's mind, before she retired to rest.

This affectionate daughter chose the 15th chapter of John's Gospel, where the Saviour, about to suffer and part in this world from his faithful disciples, who, in dismay and sorrow at the prospect of being separated from their Lord and Master, seem to have wavered, and doubted that his watchful care, when "absent in the body," would be still extended over his believing people, addressed to them those touching words of comfort and consolation, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid; ye believe in God, believe also in me;" showing them clearly, that a living faith in a risen Saviour, would ensure to all who should believe on Him, the presence of that "Comforter," "even the Spirit of Truth, unto the end of the world."

The pious mother felt its healing influence, for in her prayers that night, before she sank calmly to rest, she committed in faith the beloved child, whose love of worldly pleasures had caused her such deep anxiety, to

the care of Him who had promised "whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, believing that ye receive it, shall be given unto you;" and the sanctification of her son, "a renewed heart," was Mrs. Lee's request at the throne of Grace; the answer, she felt assured, would come, but "times and seasons" are in the hand of the Lord, and the humble Christian mother waited in faith for Him to be gracious.

And where was that son?

Intoxicated with enjoyment, enthusiastically *encoring* a half naked *danseuse* in the inspired dance of the *Ballet*!

CHAPTER XI.

Life is beautiful ; its duties
Cluster round each passing day,
While their sweet and solemn voices
Warn to work, to watch, to pray ;
They alone its blessings forfeit,
Who by sin their spirits cheat,
Or to slothful torpor yielding,
Let the rust their armour eat.

THE father of Frank Lee was a Painter, possessing much poetic talent, and that true appreciation of the "sublime and beautiful," that, had he lived, would have placed him amongst the first-class living artists of the day; but that cankerworm of genius, pecuniary difficulty, broke down his constitution in early life. Neither he nor his exemplary wife had influential connections, nor were their immediate relations able or willing to assist them during those years of privation, the man of talent in this country so often undergoes, before he attains even partial success.

The fine-toned chord is easily snapd asunder, and the sensitive and neglected Painter saw his early visions of professional aggrandisement unrealised, with the daily increasing expense of a young and helpless family, and gradually seemed to exhale away. The physicians pronounced his disorder consumption, but his devoted wife knew better; the seat of the disease was in her husband's broken and disappointed heart.

How many efforts did that loving, self-sacrificing woman make, to relieve her husband's mind; how nobly did she battle against fortune, by curtailing every possible household expense, except those necessary for her be-

loved partner's comfort, and add, by unremitting toil, at ill-requited needlework, to swell the amount of their slender income. Her dying husband saw it all, and blessed God his children would be left to the guidance and care of their practical and Christian mother.

On his marriage, he had secured for his bride a small annuity of fifty pounds a year, should she survive him, by paying a small stipend to a widow's fund. When his failing health forbad constant work at the pallet and brush, Mrs. Lee, with characteristic self *abandonne*, proposed the discontinuance of those trifling annual payments, in order to procure those little luxuries she fondly hoped would be of material service to her sinking husband; but he firmly resisted all her womanly *finesse*, and no pretence her loving care could suggest "to give up paying for what she would never want," and for what "she could very well do without," shook his determination of booking up, no matter what was back, punctually to the day, his subscription, to secure the wife he loved so truly, and his three orphan little ones, a certain provision, however slender, when he was gone. His incomparable wife only worked the harder to procure delicacies the most expensive, to nourish and strengthen his exhausted nature; but the mandate had gone forth, and the widow, with twin boys and a girl a year older, laid her idol in the dust, and meekly bowed to the will of Him who has promised to be "the husband of the widow, and the father of the fatherless."

By the advice of an old schoolfellow of her late husband's, who had often shewn him much kindness, she removed to a pleasant outlet on the south side of Dublin, between three and four miles from town, in a thickly inhabited neighbourhood; and Mr. Elmore, his friend, took a neat, pretty cottage, small, and convenient, within a few doors of his own residence on the same Terrace; and here Mrs. Lee, who, before her marriage, had been a governess, took in a few select morning pupils, and with the addition of her industry to her jointure of fifty pounds a year, with the practice of a rigid economy, was enabled to give her children a liberal education.

One of her twin boys died when he was ten years of age, and the survivor, Francis, was inconsolable, evincing much of his father's nervous sensibility, as well as delicacy of constitution; he possessed a voice full of melody, and seemed only to forget his sorrow for brother George, when warbling, like some beautiful bird, a hymn, or simple ballad, with thrilling harmony.

Some friend advised his mother to apply for him for a vacancy in the choir of St. Patrick's Cathedral, prefacing the suggestion by saying, "Little Frank must sing somewhere, and it is better for him to learn to sing Psalms than Operas."

Mrs. Lee consulted her friend Mr. Elmore, who was by profession an engineer, and after enquiring what profession she most wished her son should adopt, and being quickly answered, "the Church," a "Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ," advised the anxious parent to "try Patrick's, as the boys who worked up at every trade generally succeeded best; and besides, the salary Frank would earn would help him through College, when, by getting tuitions, he would not be a burden to his mother until he was ordained." Mr. Elmore ended by assuring Mrs. Lee that it would have given himself the greatest pleasure to take her son as a pupil, and make an engineer of him, but he saw early Frank had no taste for engineering, and would spend his time "strumming Mary's music lessons, when he ought to be learning to map."

The surpliced boy sang out his time in the old venerable Cathedral of Patrick's, entered College, obtained a few daily tuitions, and instead of strumming Mary Elmore's music lessons, sang for her Mendelssohn or Beethoven, read aloud subjects grave or gay, poetic or prose, beside her work table, and walked beside herself, when she and his sister Letty took their daily, or rather evening ramble. Mrs. Lee and Mr. Elmore consulted again together, the conference was unanimous, and the young people's attachment was considered from that day forth, by their mutual friends, *un fait accompli*.

Mary had lost her mother when an infant, her father married some years after a sensible and amiable woman, who brought him sons and daughters in abundance; his eldest child enjoyed no immunities from her seniority, nor did Mrs. Elmore treat her unkindly, but she was early taught that wholesome lesson to the young, to sacrifice with a good grace her own wishes to promote the happiness of others. She loved her father tenderly, and respected her step-mother, while to her numerous little brothers and sisters she was uniformly kind and loving; but the tide of her affections ebbed towards Mrs. Lee's cottage; its mistress had been her spiritual parent in Christ, and early taught the well remembered Scripture lesson, to the little girl standing at her knee, that was sure in after years to bring forth its fruit in due season. Her daughter had been Mary's cherished playfellow from childhood, and her son Frank, the hope and prop of the house, was Mary's devoted lover from boyhood; no wonder, then, Mary Elmore was the happiest looking, and prettiest creature in the whole neighbourhood.

What a *tableau* would it have made, on a fine Sabbath morning, to stereotype the Lee family and gentle graceful Mary, moving on in the direction of the parish church; their pew just held four, and Mrs. Lee's "second daughter," as she called her, had been long established as the *quartette* of its due number. How neat, how cheerful, and yet how serious did the Christian parent look, as she leaned on the arm of her interesting looking son, her widow's cloak, and closely fitting bonnet of rich, but plain material, so glossy, and so well kept; her open loving eye and calm subdued face were in admirable keeping with the slight agile figure and darkly expressive countenance of her cherished supporter, as he gave polite and affectionate attention to his mother's remarks, while his eye followed the lithe bounding step of the fair girl before him, who walked beside his sister, half listening, half joining in the conversation of the mother and son; while Letty Lee's small, tidy, and compact figure, set off to the greatest advantage the tall, graceful, and unconscious Mary.

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CHAPTER XII.

This let me hope, that when in public view
 I bring my pictures, men may feel them true;
 "This is a likeness," may they all declare,
 "And I have seen him, but I know not where."

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Man's vice and crime I combat as I can;
 But to his God, and conscience, leave the man.

CRABBE.

"WELL met, Mr. Dean," said the military voice of Captain Gardner, as he encountered the Dean of Grimly, at the corner of College Green; and the disguised Father Peter and his brother churchman cordially shook hands, and sauntered down, arm and arm, in the direction of Sackville Street.

"What news from Fosterton?" enquired the Captain, carelessly.

"I have been in a horrible mess," replied his friend. "Burley compromised me most dreadfully in the Parish, galvanised the congregation with an out and out Puseyite sermon, sent them all flying out of their pews before it was half over; I could have choked the fellow as I sat under him, you could conceive nothing in life more absurd."

"Phew!" cried his companion, laughing, "you whistled them back, of course?"

"Easier said than done," returned Dean Shuffell, shaking his head, "I did my best, and so did Mrs. Shuffell and the girls; but it was no go. To Warner's church they all went the next Sunday, even my own Clerk, because I would not dismiss Burley, and I, like a

fool, waiting, thinking our friend Mrs. Fosterton, who never stops raving of the edifying way the service at her favourite churches, Barnabas, and Paul, is conducted, would come to the rescue, and insist on his being retained, and so relieve me of all responsibility in the parish ; but to my utter amazement, I got a letter from her, dated from Lord Drydale's, and I at once saw I was thrown overboard, and that Burley must march. I was literally left in the lurch," and Dean Shuffell paused to take breath, looking considerably annoyed.

"That was too bad," said the Captain, "when really a step was made in the right direction to substitute something sentient and intelligent for the 'stammering ambiguous formularies' that so sadly clog the services of the Anglican Church, when rendered after the Dissenting form, at Fosterton."

"I do not feel myself any great necessity for those 'innovations,' as they are called," returned Dean Shuffell ; "but I do think when Burley was brought to the parish, to please the Fostertons, they might have known their own mind, and not brought me into such bad odour with people I have always to live amongst. It would have been a different thing if Mrs. Fosterton interfered, and made it a point with me to retain Burley ; she need not care what they said, and could go away whenever she liked ; besides, if many of them thought it was her act," continued the toady-hunting Dean, who judged of others like himself, "they would soon give in, and matters would have gone on smoothly, and without hurting anybody's conscience ; the mere non-essentials of religion could be gradually changed at Fosterton, so as to induce the Park people to reside more constantly amongst us. For I do think," he said, whispering confidentially his companion, "that if the lady had her own way in those matters, had her hands full of business in erecting founts, and crosses, and candlesticks, with illuminated missals, and embroidered altar cloths of every colour in the rainbow for the Parish Church of Fosterton, she would be weaned off London and the Continent ; that

living in such expensive style in those places has nearly made a bankrupt of her husband."

The Jesuit smiled, as the pupil of Ignatius Loyola would smile, at the disinterested piety of the Dean of Grimly ; after a pause he said—

"You are quite right, Mr. Dean, large proprietors should be kept at home in their own country ; but I suppose you had no alternative, and had to give Burley his *congé*. Are you thinking of getting another curate ?" he asked, rather abruptly.

"That is what partly brought me up to town ; but the fact is, I had another object in view," he added, in a low voice, looking searchingly into his companion's face ; "I know you will not betray me ; but I heard from a source that can be relied on, that the Bishop of Goodlands is failing fast ; now there is nothing like being in time, and your Tractarian friends have a voice in the Cabinet ; you could do something for a friend, and I am sure the Fostertons would feel as much indebted for a kindness in that way as I would myself. Sir Anthony Reynard has faithfully promised, and as he votes with the ministry, his recommendation will be attended to. He is not so much to be depended on," whispered Dean Shuffell, who was in a confiding mood, "still, I don't think him as false as the world gives him credit for ; but, however, in my case, they could not well have a 'respectable *Cawtholic*' for a Bishop, and there is no man, as the Yankees say, would go the whole hog with a liberal ministry farther than myself. And now, my good friend, if you can do anything for me—and I am sure you can—need I say how grateful I shall feel, and ever consider myself your debtor."

The Jesuit protested "nothing could give him greater pleasure, than being of the slightest service to one so much esteemed by his friends the Fostertons, and indeed by himself, but that really he had no political interest : that, to be sure, he was intimate with a good many people in power, but that, in fact, to get anything out of them, a man should be able to command half-a-dozen votes."

"Aye, but my dear Sir," cried Dean Shuffell, in an affectionate tone, "you are just the man to get at the half-dozen votes. You are grouse-shooting or partridge-shooting with My Lord Duke this, or the Earl of that, hunting with them at Melton Mowbray, or racing with them at Epsom or Ascot, and with your black-letter learning, and artistic taste for mediæval tom-foolery, not to say anything of your handsome face and *distingué* air and manner;" (throwing in a little of his favourite blarney,) "don't tell me, my gallant Captain, that you could not gain the ear of the Duchess and Countess; and you know, as well as I do, the Duchess and Countess lead their noble spouses blindfold to do whatever they like, and the same rule applies to the M.P.'s and their wives, only with this difference, small fry are always easier caught."

The Dean of Grimly and his companion laughed heartily.

"I see there is no doing you, Mr. Dean," said his military friend, giving a twitch to his moustache, "and you may depend upon it that I'll keep you in my eye;" and a strange expression passed over the countenance of Captain Gardner. "Is the Bishop's danger imminent?" he asked, with suppressed humour twinkling in his cold observant eye.

"Nothing immediate is apprehended," returned his companion, "by the physicians, but my friend, who is on the *qui vive* for me, wrote to say that he might slip through their fingers at any moment, his constitution is so broken up."

"But the worst of it is," remarked the Captain, "your ailing people never die."

"Oh! but," replied Dean Shuffell quickly, who had his heart fixed on killing the Bishop, "there is no fear of that in this poor man's case: it was a sudden and total break-up; no amount of patching would set him on his legs again; and though I should be sorry for him indeed, and I am sure would not wish for his death—he was in his way much to be liked—yet there never was a time I wanted a 'lift out of the mire' more than I do at the present moment."

The Jesuit Father thought in his own mind how much better matters were managed by his holy order, when an obnoxious or liberal Pope would be quietly dealt with by a "poisoned chalice," without one word ever being said on the subject. He could hardly repress the smile of contempt that flitted across his moustached lip, as he naturally enough remarked, "Bishops are like other people; they won't live or die for wishing; and," he added, recollecting himself, "it won't shorten this worthy man's life, looking in time after your own interests: you may reckon on my not forgetting you in the proper quarter, should an opportunity occur."

The Dean of Grimly was profuse in acknowledgments: his companion adroitly turned the conversation on his present search for a curate.

"It strikes me," he said, "that I could assist you in the matter, and I think I met the very man yesterday who would suit your hook—a young fellow whom it would be easy to come to terms with, waiting for a nomination to be ordained. He is very gentlemanly and intelligent, and the Fostertons, I am sure, would like him extremely, for he has a good deal of musical talent, and sings very pleasingly."

"Would he have anything independent of his profession?" asked Dean Shuffell, inquiringly.

"I rather think not," returned the Captain, as he stole a look out of the corner of his watchful eye into his companion's face; "but he might increase his income at Fosterton, by giving lessons in music to some leading people in the neighbourhood. I think I remember your daughters complaining that there was no efficient teacher in that part of the country."

"That wouldn't do," said the Dean of Grimly, in a reserved tone; "as my curate, it would be looked on as derogatory his doing so, *infra dig.*, and expected besides, that his appearance should be commensurate with his position, as curate to a Dean; and unless he had something beside his salary, that could not be well managed, for my income has many claims on it, and I might not be

able to pay his stipend punctually, and then there is always a cry got up about starving curates; so that, in fact, I have made up my mind not to deal in future with any but self-supporting ones;" and the Dean of Grimly affected a faint chuckle. His companion laughed outright, but his plan was not to be frustrated.

"Well," he said, "if this young man does not suit your book, I am nearly certain the Fostertons will close with him at once, to act as their private chaplain, whenever they are staying at Fosterton; for now that it is ascertained, beyond all doubt, that your refractory congregation will oppose the restoration of ancient usages in the parish church, the private chapel in the Park is nearly a certainty."

The Dean of Grimly sighed, for he was covertly opposed to a private chapel, when he himself, he knew, could not be the officiating priest.

The Jesuit read him thoroughly.

"What would hinder your curate from undertaking this occasional duty?" he asked, after a pause; "and the Fostertons might pay him liberally, and by being in the first instance appointed by you, he could be kept well in hand, so as to give no grounds of complaint amongst the Puritanical party in the parish."

"You are quite right, my dear fellow," cried Dean Shuffell, much relieved; "the thing could be managed admirably, for I fear the Fostertons are bent on the private chapel, and, as you say, I could keep my own curate within bounds better than a clergyman over whom I had no control, who might rival me in more ways than one."

The disguised Father Peter thought his friend took a fair and just view of the subject, and Dean Shuffell enquired—"Has this young fellow moderate views respecting religious matters?"

"I should rather think so," replied Captain Gardner, smiling, as he remembered where he had made his acquaintance, at the rehearsal of an opera the day before. "Dine with me to-day at the Bilton, at seven," he said,

after a pause, "and a young fellow who knew him in College, with whose family I am intimate, I will get to meet you, and he will tell you all about this Mr. Lee—I think that is his name."

"Thank you," cried Dean Shuffell, "I shall be punctual. I only hope he may have more discretion than Burley, and carry himself smoothly with all parties."

The friends separated for the present, as Captain Gardner remembered he had an engagement; and the Dean of Grimly, seated that evening with a Jesuit and his pupil, at the Bilton, sipping his wine over the desert, agreed to engage the services of Mr. Frank Lee, as his future curate, and instructed Mr. Stamer to offer terms to his friend, all reference to the private chapel at Fosterton Park being, at Captain Gardner's request, suppressed.

The host and his guest, Mr. Stamer, had to attend a concert, and Dean Shuffell reluctantly wished them good bye, appointing the day after, but one, for an interview with the latter, at his hotel, to learn Mr. Lee's decision respecting the curacy.

When the door closed on the Dean of Grimly, a strange metamorphose seemed to have passed over both gentlemen; the easy *dégagé* air of Captain Gardner was exchanged for a grave, business-like look, while a shade, it was difficult to define, of reserve and abstracted thought, passed over his companion's face.

"Have you confessed lately, Mr. Stamer?" asked the church militant, after a short pause, in rather a severe tone, of his companion.

The young man colored slightly, but yet seemed prepared for the question; he answered, slowly—

"Not very long ago, Father Peter, I attended to my duties."

The Captain's sallow countenance was turned full on him.

"The time you specify is indefinite, and our Holy Catholic Church requires uniform observance; and remember, the blessed sacrament of confession, alone, can

cleanse you from mortal sin; do not neglect it, my son, any longer: you require, at least, monthly, the absolution of the Church, for the sin of living almost entirely amongst heretics; and I hope you continue," he added, "to repeat an office to the Virgin, and an *angela*, while you are *not listening*;" repeating the two last words with much emphasis: "but your body present at the heretic service in the College Chapel every morning."

His companion remained silent, whilst the Jesuit continued—

"I had a letter this day from your pious Catholic mother; like the holy saints of old, she is suffering a living martyrdom, from that bigoted heretic, your father, who would bring up his children, if he could, in his own cursed faith, and thinks he does," added the Jesuit father, with a caustic smile; "but your blessed mother holds steadfast to her own true and infallible Church, and submits entirely to her guidance; and look at the good results," continued Father Peter; "her five sons are faithful Catholics, and her only daughter would enter a convent to-morrow, never to leave it, but that her spiritual guide thinks her bigoted tyrant of a father would cut her off to a shilling."

"Her father is not a tyrant," replied young Stamer: "there does not breathe a kinder, or more indulgent parent, and liberal, as far as money goes, than my father."

"Young man," said the Jesuit, in a severe tone, "he is liberal of his money, and kind to his children, because he believes them to be brought up in the damnable heresy of Luther, but if one of the six were to accompany their mother to attend the blessed sacrifice of the mass, would not your bigot father, and his orange old bachelor brother, Sir Charles Stamer, turn that Catholic child out, and cut them off without a farthing?"

"He certainly would," replied the young man, "but my father, fairly enough, says, that my mother married, knowing his sentiments; that though he never would interfere with her religion, he would rigidly insist on his

children, boys and girls, being brought up Protestants; and this was actually inserted in their marriage articles, and signed by both my father and mother."

"She signed with the Church's sanction," said the Jesuit, pointedly, "that good might come out of evil, and has long since been absolved, for her breach of a covenant that promotes the religion of the blessed Virgin and Saints."

"My father kept his part of it to the letter," remarked young Stamer, drily, "for he never has interfered with my mother, in any way, in the exercise of her religion, and I think it would break his heart, if he were to discover his children hated the Bible, and deceived himself."

Father Peter's bright, flinty eye, shot an almost fiendish glance towards his companion, by whom, however, it was not perceived, as he sat, with his elbow on the table, and his head resting on his hand, his eyes intently fixed on an orange-peel, on the desert-table before him.

"The true faith is always one of suffering," said the Jesuit, after a pause of some moments, in a lofty tone, "and your blessed mother deserves well of her children, for has she not saved them from hell fire, by bringing them up in the true Catholic faith, that has power to loose and bind on earth—the mother of all churches, both here, and in heaven. Surely, your earthly mother's children should think no self-abnegation too great, on their part, for the religion of the immaculate Queen of Heaven, who helped your parent to work this miracle, to save her children from everlasting damnation."

The advocate of broken vows glanced towards his auditor; he only looked half convinced. "Your mother mentioned," added, the Priest, in a quiet tone, "that your father had spies set on you, to report to him whether you attended the College Chapel daily, and where you went to prayers on a Sunday, and how you spent the day; she begged that you would be most circumspect in observing what your father required. I think,

Charley, you are able to foil a detective, not to say some Protestant Parson, set on you as a spy, that would

‘Hang his cat on a Monday,
For eating of a mouse on Sunday.’ ”

“He has no right to set such spies on me,” cried the young man indignantly, “nor I won’t submit to be watched.”

“Take the thing coolly, my friend,” said the Jesuit, “that is the way to circumvent an enemy; and go to-morrow morning, after those College prayers you are so watched at, to the Franciscan Chapel; about 11 o’clock you will find a holy man in the confessional there, he will absolve you from all the errors and frailties you must have committed since you last attended confession; for young men, their own masters in a large city, have many peccadilloes to confess, and are not in a state of grace without constant absolution.”

Charley promised to visit on the morrow the prescribed panacea for sin—the confessional; and the future young baronet, and Captain Gardner, drove to a private concert; the latter suggested to him, as they drove along, not to lose sight of his college friend, but to book him as Shuffell’s curate; “for,” continued the sagacious Jesuit, “the rector of Fosterton is such a worldling, and so devoid of all religion, he can be easily made to poison the mind of his curate, and disinfest his principles of their Scriptural taint, so as to prepare this young enthusiast for that ecstatic devotion, only to be found in the Catholic Church.”

“I hope the move will be for his good,” remarked young Stamer; “he was my class-fellow in College, I dropt a couple of years while we were abroad, so he took out his degree before me; he is greatly to be liked; but as he is, I suspect, in straightened circumstances, the Dean of Grimly’s curacy won’t be a bad thing for him; it will give him a fair start.”

“Whosoever converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save his own soul from hell,” observed Father Peter, in a solemn tone of voice; “and this young man,

my son, was a snare in your path some years ago; it is well for you now to return good for evil, by putting him on the right road to that true fold, our holy infallible Church, that opens her Catholic arms to receive the most obdurate heretic."

Charley Stamer was silent for a moment.

"Frank Lee will never turn Catholic," he at length said, "the Bible, and nothing but the Bible, was what he learned in the nursery; he has often brought forward arguments against our ancient faith, that would stagger a Cardinal, and I admit were regular posers to myself; the thing is simply impossible; Frank Lee will live and die a Protestant."

Captain Gardner would have said, "*nous verrons*;" but his double, Father Peter, replied in a solemn severe tone, "Nothing is impossible with our Holy order, the faithful servants of that one true Church, to whose keeping are committed the keys of heaven. How often have I warned you," he continued, "to avoid those profane arguments, the device of Satan, and the apostate Luther, to subvert your faith, after witnessing the exposition of the incarnate Redeemer on his altar throne, and hearing the high mass of deposition sung." He added in a voice of indignant expostulation, "How dare you, young man, pollute your ears with the slang of heresy, 'a sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal?'"

His companion looked mortified, and remained silent; he had an indistinct memory that the Holy Father's quotation was not applied in the same sense used by St. Paul; but Charley Stamer's knowledge of Scripture was neither correct nor extended. In childhood, though it was read daily by his father, in presence of him, his brothers, and his sister, still, by his other parent taking the simple precaution of stuffing her children's ears with a little plug of cotton on those occasions, the sound thereof, in the impressionable age of infancy, never reached the retentive organs of the heart and brain; and after she had impressed their young minds with the dogmas of a Church who denounces the use of the reasoning faculties,

a silently repeated *Ave Maria*, or *Angeloa*, while the word of God was reading, was found as an antidote most efficacious in preventing that "good seed" taking root, which was able to make them "wise unto salvation."

The Jesuit resumed the conversation after some moments.

"This young heretic's conversion is not so difficult nor so impracticable as you may suppose, my son," he said, in a low quiet tone of voice, "and the Church, in great mercy, no doubt decreed as a penance to you, for being so drawn after this dangerous Lutheran, the glorious task of commencing the good work by trapping him into a snare, where the meshes of his own vanity and æsthetic taste, will catch this fine singing bird, no matter how he flutters, or beats his prison cage to be free; snare him, as Dean Shuffell's curate, and before long you will hear him intoning a Puseyite missal, before a lighted up altar. The transition to our ancient and orthodox faith is easy and certain. The Heretic Bishop was right when he said, 'Puseyism was the ferry boat to Popery.' " And Captain Gardner laughed, as Jesuits laugh, while his companion cried out, as if much relieved—

"Here we are! all right!"

And the two friends entered the Concert room.

In the gay and glittering throng the spiritual dangers of young Stamer were not forgotten by his disguised Confessor; his quick eye signalled an active member of the Propaganda present, and writing with his pencil on a slip of paper, "I breakfast in a private room at the Bilton, be with me punctually at nine to-morrow," dropped the missive, carelessly, without recognising by the most distant salutation his Propagandist friend, who picked it up, and Mr. Charles Stamer, after the hour of tryste specified for this confidential meeting, was under the surveillance of a far more vigilant spy than that myth of the Jesuit's brain, "The Protestant Parson," so cleverly *improvised* to raise the ire of a high spirited young man.

The extracted promise was punctually kept, the Con-

fessional of the Franciscan Chapel heard the sins and shortcomings of Charley Stamer; the absolution was spoken that sent him forth as a new-born babe to chalk up another score against his next confession, and the "forty hours" sweet devotion was his allotted penance, that is, hearing High Mass, and the exposition of the ~~real~~ presence to the veneration of the faithful for "Quarant Ore," or forty hours continuously in one church, emblazoned for the occasion with lights, and adorned with flowers, the Benediction to be given when the "forty hours" expire, when the "exposition" then ceases, and in some other appointed chapel High Mass commences at the same time, and the "forty hours exposition" begins there, and so on. But before this expiatory punishment commenced, Mr. Charles Stamer, by Captain Gardner's orders, sat down and wrote to his indulgent, confiding father in the country, a long pleasant epistle, not omitting to mention having dined with his father's old friend, Captain Gardner, who was full of kind enquiries and friendly messages for his parent and uncle, and remembered, and spoke so much about the famous hunt he had, the winter before, with Sir Charles Stamer's well-known Fox Hounds, and hoped, some time or another, he would enjoy a hunt again at Stamer Hall, shew off his favorite Hunter, *et cetera*, for Sir Charles's gratification, and so forth.

While the worthy Baronet, as much pleased as his brother with "Charley's letter," cried out in hospitable glee, "And we must have him too, this winter; Gardner is a capital fellow, rides like a brick, and drinks 'the glorious, pious, and immortal memory' in a bumper, from the bottom of his heart."

Dear, kind, confiding, unsuspecting old gentleman, your favorite nephew was that very moment concealed behind a latticed screen in the Metropolitan Chapel, performing his allotted penance, the "Quarant Ore!" and his mother silently retired to read the sealed note her duped husband just handed her, enclosed in "Charley's letter."

The address was in her son's handwriting, the contents were the penmanship of one of her spiritual guides, Father Peter !!!

Such is the versatile genius of an accomplished Jesuit. "By their fruits ye shall know them." "Can the same fountain send forth sweet water and bitter?"

CHAPTER XIII.

Watch ! for there are foes abroad,
Who would tempt thy soul from God ;
Dangers in the world are found,
Evil men are all around ;
Watch ! or thou wilt surely stray,
Wandering from the narrow way.

ON the return of Mr. and Mrs. Fosterton, to Fosterton Park, they found their friend, Dean Shuffell, had not yet arrived from Dublin, and, accustomed as they had been to the "incense of his praise," they felt his absence from the Park daily a positive privation; it is true, Mrs. Shuffell and the three Miss Shuffells, were most assiduous in their attendance to make up for "the Dean's absence," spending the greater portion of each day with their "dear friends," but Mrs. Shuffell possessed no originality, and was only a sort of dutiful echo to her plotting husband, while her ugly daughters played an insipid glee to the family chorus, their minds being quite as commonplace as their figures or faces; and their "dear friends," who disliked, extremely, sameness of any kind, contemplated all manner of things to relieve the *ennui* of enduring, without any other company, such bores as "the Shuffells."

Mr. Fosterton proposed immediate flight, and, in his own mind, fixed upon Baden Baden, where he could have something exciting in the way of play. Mrs. Fosterton inclined to Paris, but the season had not commenced there, so, in despair, she gave it up. Nothing could be duller or more stupid than their every day routine.

"Then, if we don't fix on Baden," cried Mr. Fosterton, one morning, or rather noon, as he entered his wife's dressing room, "have some pity on me, and be denied to those unconscionable women who haunt us so unmercifully. In a crowd of other people I used to escape them always, but there is no eluding them when we are boxed up here by ourselves. Down—pounce on us they come every day, no matter how we treat them; do think of something, Emily, to keep them at home."

"The curate is dismissed," returned Mrs. Fosterton, laughing, "so there can be no diversion made in our favour in that quarter, but relief may be nearer than we think, for Mrs. Shuffell told me last evening, the Dean had engaged a new curate—quite a musical genius."

"How I wish he were come," returned her husband, "and I certainly would not scruple to set Mrs. Shuffell and her three daughters on him."

"He could not marry them all," returned his wife, laughing, "and the poor silly goose of a mother is such a barefaced match maker, he must be very green, indeed, if he thought of marrying at all in that quarter."

"To be sure," returned Mr. Fosterton; "but a poor wretch of a curate, on a nominal seventy-five pounds a year—for it is notorious," he added, *en parenthèse*, "that our friend Dean Shuffell never pays his curates—could not afford to be fastidious, and I suppose those girls will have something."

"Not a *sous*," returned Mrs. Fosterton. "What could have put that, Frederick, in your head? It is now generally known that the poor Dean is next to a pauper."

"Oh, so I heard long ago," returned her husband, "but I thought it was all malice, because Shuffell is a sort of black sheep amongst your sticklers for consistency, and that sort of thing. Where did he pick up this musical curate?" he asked enquiringly. "We shall now, I suppose, have something like singing in Fosterton Church."

This last remark set Mrs. Fosterton on a favourite

theme; the utter impossibility of converting the uninteresting parish church into a dim religious fane, whose cloistered aisles, and mediæval ornaments, would create sentiments of awe and mystery, so requisite to excite fervent devotion.

"That can never be excited, I promise you, Emily, in the old Parish Church of Fosterton," cried her husband, who could be talked into anything. "I am sure I remember going there since I was a boy, and can't recollect ever saying half-a-dozen prayers within its walls, and certainly never felt those feelings of awe and mystery, that I quite agree with you an imposing ceremony can inspire, something to attract attention, and keep one from dozing off," he added, laughing. "I am sorry," he continued, "that you mentioned to the Drydales our little plan of getting up a private chapel for ourselves; they have so many qualms and fears about Popery, that it is really absurd to give in to them; and after going to the expense and trouble of bringing all those things from London, as we did, to dress it up, and putting Gardner agog about it, I do think it was very silly of you, Emily, to give it up all at once, to gratify you sister's prejudices."

"Why," returned the lady, extenuatingly, "Louisa made it such a point with me, and placed all those externals in such an indifferent ridiculous light, and brought Scripture and History to prove that they were unknown to the Apostles, and never used in the early Church, but introduced centuries after, when errors crept in, that, while listening to her at Ashworth, I made up my mind nearly to give up Barnabas, and Paul, when next in London, not to say getting up a private chapel at Fosterton Park."

"Louise could persuade you to anything," remarked Mr. Fosterton; "she, and her husband, in their own opinion, are wiser than anybody else, and far better judges of religious matters," he added, ironically, "than the most learned Prelate on the Bench; but they never shall persuade me to give up Barnabas and Paul, without comparison, the pleasantest and most fashionable churches

in London; always something new going on there; a Saint's day, or a Festival, to keep one awake; and you, yourself Emily, who dressed up the altar so tastefully with flowers and lights, 'quite artistic,' Lady Hovenden said, and Gardner and the Mellworths admired it so much: and the altar cloth, you and Lady Arley embroidered; it really would be too bad now to allow yourself to be preached into deserting churches where one is sure of being amused, and meeting people worth knowing."

Mrs. Fosterton shook her head dissentingly, as she answered—

"It is all very interesting, and exciting, and that sort of thing, still, Frederick, I cannot persuade myself that Louise is not right, that God, who is a Spirit, cares not for a gorgeous Temple and imposing ceremonial, but accepts spiritual worship, no matter where offered up."

"How soon you change your mind, Emily; but those are Lady Drydale's words," he added, laughing; "and I suppose I shall soon find you quoting Scripture as frequently as her ladyship."

Mrs. Fosterton looked annoyed, and colored; her sister she both loved and respected.

"I only wish I were one half as good as Louisa," she replied, warily. "She is never carried away by her own feelings, and I always find in the end she is sure to be right."

"Not a bit more, Emily, than you or other people," replied the gentleman, in a tone of pique, who felt no slight jealousy of Lady Drydale's influence over his wife. "She only sets up for being better than any body else, with all that vulgar cant about Scripture, that is quite superseded now, with educated people, by a developed taste for a grand ritual, and an enlightened study of the early fathers of the Church, who, of course, were the best judges of how religious worship should be conducted; and I only wish Gardner were here, and he and I would soon rig up the chapel in the true Barnabas and Paul style."

Mrs. Fosterton was going to say the authority of our

Lord, his apostles, and immediate disciples, pointed to no developed mode of worship, and had a prior claim to the judgment of the early fathers, but the mention of Captain Gardner put to flight all thoughts of prolonging the argument; and, besides, she felt somewhat flattered that her husband had so warmly adopted opinions she recently advocated so earnestly herself, in opposition to her sister's views, whose judgment in most matters was universally respected.

"I am sure," she replied, "that I wish heartily, Captain Gardner, or any other agreeable person, would come to break in on the tiresome monotony of those Shuffells; how provoking, that he was out of town the day we passed through Dublin, but I suppose there is no chance of our seeing him until after the opera people leave."

"I haven't seen my letters, to-day," returned Mr. Fosterton, "it is likely there is one from Gardner," and he stood up, and rang the bell. "Let Rimino send up my letters and papers," he said, to Mrs. Fosterton's maid, who answered the summons.

The woman stood hesitatingly for a moment, and then retired.

"What is the matter with her?" asked Mr. Fosterton of his wife, as the servant closed the door. "I never saw a woman look so puzzled and frightened."

"Indeed," replied Mrs. Fosterton, raising her eyes off a piece of embroidery, on the table, she was examining, "I did not look at her."

The maid entered with the letters, on a silver salver.

"What is the matter, Murray?" asked her mistress, enquiringly, as she observed the woman's agitated and alarmed look.

"Mrs. Felton, ma'am, that is dangerously ill; it took her very bad, ma'am, not half an hour ago. She breakfasts early, ma'am, and complained she had no appetite, and a bad head-ache, and made nothing of it; but just as she was taking Miss Fosterton out to walk, ma'am, she got just as if she was smothering like, and a convulsion seized her, just as the dressing-room bell

rang, and I didn't like to alarm you, ma'am ; but I was frightened out of my life, ma'am, seeing the poor dear lady working like in a fit."

" You have frightened Mrs. Fosterton well, now, at all events," cried her master, impatiently.

The woman muttered an apology, and withdrew.

" Emily, don't be so much alarmed," cried her husband, walking to where his wife stood aghast. " Servants exaggerate so. I suppose Mrs. Felton got some sudden faintness, and you look as frightened as if she were dying."

" I could not command myself," cried his wife, in an agitated voice, " I was so dreadfully shocked, to ask was the doctor sent for ; if not, let him be called in now, Frederick, without a moment's delay, and I must see my poor, faithful Felton, if she is not dead, as I fear she is, from Murray's frightened look."

" Not at all," replied her husband, " but you are nervous, and so easily excited ; I will go and see Rimino, and he will send for the doctor, and tell me all about it."

" I will see the poor sick woman," cried his wife, as she flew by her husband, in the direction of Mrs. Felton's apartment.

On her way she encountered Mr. Fosterton's own man, Rimino, with an empty coffee-cup and saucer in his hand, that had been recently used.

" Rimino," exclaimed his mistress, " Mr. Fosterton is looking for you ; has the doctor been sent for, to see Mrs. Felton ?"

" Yes, madam," replied the Italian, " not five minutes after she was taken ill, I sent for him express, he must be out, or he would have been here before now."

" Send other messengers after him, Rimino," cried his mistress, impatiently ; " let the whole country be searched for him, Mrs. Felton cannot be let die, without advice."

Rimino bowed profoundly, and hastened to attend on his master, while Mrs. Fosterton hurried on in a high state of excitement, bursting into the room where Mrs. Felton lay on a couch, seemingly dying.

A look of extreme exhaustion overspread her pallid features, and her eyes looked glassy and staring.

"My poor dear Felton," exclaimed her mistress, with much emotion, as she kindly pressed the sick woman's hand in hers, "what could have happened to you? I never saw you better than you were last evening, when you brought Louise for her last kiss. How were you attacked? Murray, I think, said you suffered with a head-ache."

The apparently dying woman made an effort to speak; but it seemed to increase the painful difficulty of breathing she laboured under, and her mistress entreated that she should not distress herself by speaking.

"We were going out to walk, mamma," said the pretty intelligent little girl that nestled at the side of the couch, dressed as if equipped for out-door exercise, "and Mrs. Felton lay down on the couch, and can't get off of it;" and Louise's eyes filled with tears, while she half sobbed out, "Help her up, mamma, and I'll help her too, or she'll never walk more with Louise;" and the child, who was about five years old, with her tiny hands attempted to raise her beloved attendant.

A tremulous quiver passed over the features of the sick woman.

"She hears you, my darling child," cried her parent; "but you must not worry, Louise, your dear suffering governess, by touching her;" and Mrs. Fosterton motioned to her own maid to remove the child.

Mrs. Felton feebly held out her hand towards Louise, and the little girl sprang forward and clung to it, sobbing as if her heart would break.

"Louise, you will kill me," said Mrs. Fosterton, "if you cry so, and make dear Mrs. Felton worse."

But the child was not to be restrained by her mother's rebuke, and her governess, with a gasp for breath, said faintly, "Go, Louise," while she feebly motioned with her hand towards Murray.

Louise stopped sobbing, and Murray bore her, subdued and unresisting, in her arms, out of the room. The

sick woman's eyes followed the child with almost the earnestness of a dying gaze.

"You are better, I think," said Mrs. Fosterton anxiously. "Louise's crying, I am sure it was, that aroused you. Speak, my good faithful Felton," she added in a broken voice, "and say you know me."

The suffering woman faintly articulated, "Yes."

"Thank God!" ejaculated Mrs. Fosterton fervently.

"I think, ma'am," said Murray, who returned after consigning Miss Fosterton to a housemaid's care, "that if Mrs. Felton took another little drop of wine, it might do her good. I gave her some, ma'am, before you came, but she seemed to like water better."

"How foolish of me," exclaimed Mrs. Fosterton, "not to think of giving her something, or doing something for her. Throw up the window, Murray, and give me a glass of water, and I'll see if she will take it."

Mrs. Felton drank the water eagerly, when placed to her lips; it seemed to revive her considerably, and after drinking one or two draughts, her breathing became easier, and the violent symptoms abated.

She was able to speak faintly when the doctor arrived; the pulse was felt, and the doctor's head was shaken, and one or two leading questions asked, and pills at night and a draught every second hour prescribed for the patient, and the M.D. pocketed his fee, and assured Mrs. Fosterton, who had retired to her dressing-room for the benefit of his private opinion, "that unless something unforeseen occurred, Mrs. Felton would be likely to recover; that her attack was a very peculiar case of syncope, and that he had learned from Rimino, who had taken to her sitting-room letters, just as she was going to walk, that he was quite startled at her livid appearance, and that she had a cup of coffee on the table, he supposed ready to take, feeling herself ill."

"Murray tells me," said Mrs. Fosterton, "that she takes coffee every day at that hour, and the poor woman herself fancies it was that cup of coffee that knocked her

up; but the attack commenced, it would seem, with a head-ache she complained of in the morning."

The M.D. was in a fog, but the faculty seldom admits its ignorance of a patient's disorder. The doctor, besides, had a clue to his, for Rimino, when officiously ushering him in, by word and grimace explained most satisfactorily Mrs. Felton's sudden illness.

"Epileptic fit, Sir," he whispered; "but the poor lady would lose her bread if it were known; and she brings it on, Sir, sometimes herself by —" and Rimino raised his hand to his mouth, throwing back his head, at the same time drawing in his breath, as if imbibing something pleasant, and grimaced, and shrugged, and nodded at the doctor. That gentleman gave a comprehensive and grave look.

"Don't mention anything of it to my lady, Sir, for she knows it already, and couldn't abide you ever after, Sir, for speaking of it to her; but if you prescribe, Sir, change of air for Miss Fosterton's governess, my lady, Sir, will be very much obliged to you."

"I hope your patient's recovery won't be tedious, Doctor," cried Mrs. Fosterton, as she extended, at parting, two of her fair fingers for the medico's slight pressure.

"I apprehend it will be very much so, Mrs. Fosterton," returned M.D. "The constitution is a good deal broken up, and when it is, native air is the best restorative."

The doctor smiled, bowed, and retired, while the lady, nearly inconsolable, spent the remainder of the day beside his patient's bed.

Towards evening Mrs. Felton was much better, and enjoyed a comfortable and refreshing sleep. As she opened her eyes, she met those of her kind and attached mistress.

"I am so thankful," cried Mrs. Fosterton, fervently, "to see you, my long tried friend, so much recovered; your countenance now is beginning to resume its own color, and in a day or two, I ~~hope~~ to see you quite

yourself; but the doctor says you must have change of air."

"I cannot account for what came over me," said the sick woman, feebly, "I am so weak and exhausted; and then, the commencement of it, after I drank that cup of coffee, was a sinking, and sickness, nigh unto death."

"But you were ill in the morning, and never let me know of it; Murray said you had a bad head-ache."

"Oh! nothing, but one of my thinking head-aches," answered Mrs. Felton, smiling faintly. "But I am so distressed, dear Mrs. Fosterton, at having you so much shocked and alarmed; and then, never quitting my room all day; do let me entreat of you to go down to Mr. Fosterton," she added, "and I do feel so grateful for all your kindness and affection to me. Lord, teach me how I may repay it," she mentally ejaculated; and she thought of her little pupil, Louise.

"Do not speak of gratitude to me," returned Mrs. Fosterton, "it is I, should be grateful; through how many trying illnesses have you nursed me—how patiently have you borne with my impatience—how gently have you tried to make me love and serve God, with the same singleness of heart you do yourself? I thought it all over to-day," she cried, passionately, "as I looked on your features, rigid, almost in death."

"I too thought it was death," said Mrs. Felton, slowly, "and entering that dark valley, how petty and insignificant appeared the perishing things of time! To be washed in the blood of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world," she added, fervently, "united to God, in Christ Jesus, was then the only sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection."

The beautiful face of Mrs. Fosterton was suffused with tears.

"May you, my dear, warm-hearted lady," she resumed, earnestly, after a moment's pause, "escape from the snare of the fowler, the pomps and vanity of a deceitful world, and in that awful hour rest your hopes on

a crucified Saviour, not on the ' wood, hay, and stubble' of human invention, that shall be ' burnt up by fire.' "

" Emily," said Mr. Fosterton, the morning after, as he lounged over the breakfast-table, in his wife's luxuriently fitted-up dressing-room, that partook quite as much of the character of a boudoir as one dedicated by a fashionable and beautiful woman to the necessary, and important purposes of the " toilette," " was it not fortunate Sir Anthony dropped in yesterday? I, at once, secured him for dinner; for, with you taken up in that sick woman's room, what would have become of me, if left by myself, to the mercy of the house of Shuffell?" and Mr. Fosterton gave a well-executed French shrug, while his handsome features were distorted into a most expressive grimace.

" Miss Eudora could have indulged you with some execrable music," cried Mrs. Fosterton, laughing, " and Miss Theodosia, I suppose, with a new stitch of crochet; then, there was no fear of going to sleep, while ' mamma' and Miss Shuffell backbited their neighbours."

" Oh! aye," returned her husband, " that sort of thing may do now and again, but I am dead sick of the same old story about Gibbon, and his wife and daughter, with ' who said this,' and ' who said that' about the schools: I wish, heartily, the Dean would come back, there is some variety about him."

" Oh! I forgot to tell you," cried Mrs. Fosterton, " that I had a note this morning, before I was up, from the Deanery, announcing his advent by this night's mail."

" Indeed!" returned her husband, " he comes by the night mail, I suppose, to give him a day longer Bishop hunting; Sir Anthony tells me, that at any given hour you may meet the Dean of Grimly on the back stairs of Dublin Castle."

His wife laughed.

" My letter will be in time to catch him this morning," resumed the gentleman; " it would be pleasant his seeing, before we decided on any governess Sir Anthony's sister may fix on to supply Felton's place."

"Oh! I am in hopes," returned Mrs. Fosterton, quickly, "that my poor dear Felton will be quite herself shortly; she has made a wonderful rally during the night, and looked, just now, very much as usual, only extremely weak."

"Don't deceive yourself, Emily," returned Mr. Fosterton, "the woman has been breaking, Rimino tells me, a long time; but she is always so anxious not to alarm or annoy you, she kept her ailments to herself; but the doctor, Rimino says, told the woman to try her native air, and it would be cruelty to prevent her."

"I am not so selfish," returned Mrs. Fosterton, warmly, "as to wish to sacrifice the health of one I esteem so highly as Felton, to my own gratification and comfort, in having such a faithful and excellent creature about Louise, but I thought that as we go about so much, she would have change of air often enough."

"But sick people are such a bore," returned her husband. "Now, don't look so grave, Emily," he added, as he saw a cloud passing over his wife's brow, "there is nobody values Felton more than I do, or would do more to retain her about our little girl; and over the boys she has far more control than their tutor had, they are so attached to her; but I wish to save you the misery of seeing her die, when, if she tried her native air, she might soon get strong and come back again; for, mind you, I only commissioned Sir Anthony to write to his sister, to engage a temporary governess for Louise."

Mrs. Fosterton acquiesced, firmly convinced her favorite would return in better health after a few weeks; and before she left the breakfast table, was deep in arrangements for expediting, with all possible comfort to the invalid, Mrs. Felton's departure from Fosterton Park, to enjoy the renovating breezes of her "native air."

CHAPTER XIV.

Nothing is proof against the general curse
 Of Vanity! that seizes all below;
 The only amaranthine flower on earth
 Is Virtue; the only lasting treasure Truth.
 But what is Truth? 'Twas Pilate's question put
 To Truth itself—that deigned him no reply;
 And wherefore?

COWPER.

“WE do not ask you to take a part in our little *Burletta*, Mr. Lee,” said the elder Miss Mellworth, as she swallowed an ice after dinner at Fosterton Park, “we only covet your applause. What harm in the world can there be?” she asked, with an air of innocence, “in listening to good music, and *encoring* good acting?” and the young lady smiled archly in the face of the interesting looking young curate, who sat beside her.

“Why, not so much harm,” replied her companion, “in enjoying amusements of this kind, as that they take up the attention and thoughts from graver and more important matters.”

“Then, you admit,” returned Miss Mellworth, with a quick glance towards Captain Gardner, who sat opposite, beside her sister, “that an Opera is an *amusement* that good people, like you, can enjoy; the only difficulty seems to be your danger of enjoying it too much.”

“Just so,” returned Mr. Lee, frankly, “Operas were my besetting sins in times gone by,” and Frank thought of his mother’s strictness on his play-going delinquencies,

"but now, in my profession, there is but little temptation in that way, for in a large parish like Fosterton, I often have not time to think of necessary business, not to say frivolous pleasures."

"To be sure," returned Miss Mellworth, demurely. "The Dean of Grimly," she added, slyly glancing towards that dignitary, who with his broad round face, radiant in smiles, paid obsequious court to the fair hostess at the head of the table, "is an advocate for working curates, he thinks it good for the development of that *genus*, I suppose, to let his perform parish duties without the interference of the rector."

Frank Lee could not help smiling, for since he had come to Fosterton, Dean Shuffell, under one pretence or another, had left him the whole duty to perform, except in taking part in the public services of the Church.

"Well, perhaps, if the Dean did as you say, Miss Mellworth," he replied, "the curate would in the end be a gainer by it; Satan, you know, always finds some handy work for idle hands to do."

"I know nothing about such a horrible person," replied the young lady, shuddering, "I only know you have made very transparent excuses for not giving the light of your countenance to such innocent enjoyment; but good music, I believe, is not now considered orthodox by Puritan schismatics," and Miss Mellworth stood up, as Mrs. Fosterton's circling nod was responded to by the ladies moving to the drawing room.

Frank Lee felt piqued and annoyed with himself, for not stating more definitely his reasons for not attending the Private Theatricals at Fosterton Park, but he was timid at giving offence to the Fostertons, who had treated him so hospitably and kindly since he came to reside in the parish; and besides, their position in life was of a higher class than his own, or the society he had hitherto mixed in, so that, in some degree dazzled by the gay fashionable company he found himself in, he shrunk from avowing his real sentiments, "that a Minister of Christ was misplaced at a Theatrical entertainment," though, in

his unrenewed heart, Frank Lee would have infinitely preferred listening to an Opera than performing a round of duties (imperative as he considered them, in the profession he had chosen), to constitute an upright and respectable clergyman.

Captain Gardner was the first deserter from the dining room. "He always considered it," he said, "a great privilege, to be allowed to rejoin the fairer portion of society as soon as possible, and was not a subscriber to the doctrine, 'that a partial eclipse enhanced the brilliancy of a luminary.'" By this manœuvre the gallant Captain was admitted into the confidence of *coteries* that less deserving men never enjoyed, and now, as he quietly entered the drawing room of Mrs. Fosterton, nearly every lady present hailed his arrival as a most agreeable interruption.

The fair hostess, and most of her lady guests, who were staying in the house, were full of the projected theatricals, all eager to discuss that important matter, their own assigned parts, while some divulged in strict confidence the dresses in which they proposed exhibiting. Mrs. Fosterton was deep in the discussion of dressing a lady, who was to personate a bride, in Brussels lace instead of Honiton, when she perceived Captain Gardner enter, and immediately called on him to decide this knotty point.

The Captain, in his own sly way, heard both sides of the question, and, as the bride was an English woman, pronounced "her dress should be Brussels instead of Honiton;" for, said he, "what lady does not prefer the texture of her robe to be woven in a foreign loom?" and with this little bit of quiet sarcasm, the Captain fell back in the direction of the low comfortable seat Miss Mellworth occupied. "Let me condole with you," he said, in a low voice, slipping quietly into a *fautueil* beside her; "for once in your life you have failed."

The lady turned on him an *espiègle* glance, while she said carelessly, "Not yet."

"*Nous verrons*," returned her companion, "the weight of office is too new to him at present not to be very im-

portant. To act the Protestant parson, after the most approved model, is just now his highest flight. I wish Fosterton would let me withdraw my bet, for I quite despair your securing this young curate as our prompter."

"Rather soon to give up," cried Miss Mellworth, sharply, "I only opened the trenches half an hour ago, by asking him to applaud our acting; he had but courage to give me an indirect refusal; his capitulation is pretty certain," she added, nodding her head slightly, "before half the evening is over."

"How you will flatter him!" remarked the Captain, looking at the lady admiringly.

"Not a bad lever for upsetting the firm rooted opinion of your men," returned Miss Mellworth, laughing.

"What a clever, conquering woman you are! I do think," said the gentleman, fixing on her intelligent face eyes full of admiration.

"Those are not your thoughts," replied the lady, colouring slightly.

"Listen, then!" exclaimed her companion emphatically, and he turned to an open piano near him, and commenced playing.

"What ecstatic devotion is expressed in what you have just played, Captain Gardner," said Mrs. Fosterton, as she stood up and approached the instrument, as he concluded. "I do not remember ever hearing it before," added she; "is it your own?"

"Yes," replied the Captain, in a low distinct voice, "the inspiration of the moment."

The large bouquet Miss Mellworth held in her hand, was raised as if to enjoy its perfume, but so as to effectually conceal her face.

Mrs. Fosterton sighed as she said: "What power music's spell has over me!"

"How earnestly do I pray," returned the gentleman in a low deep voice, "that the queen of my devotion may be influenced by its power." And the disguised Father Peter's eyes, and those of Miss Mellworth met.

"How enthusiastic you are," remarked Mrs. Foster-

ton, "but those only who feel strongly can make music the vehicle of worship and of thought."

The dark expressive eyes, that gazed so intently on Miss Mellworth's face, were not withdrawn. With some effort Captain Gardner remarked, as Mr. Lee and some other gentlemen approached the piano: "Here is a man who is not insensible to sweet sounds; come, Mr. Lee, let Mrs. Fosterton judge how your thoughts are attuned to harmony this evening." The young curate, half abashed, declined the invitation, expressing a modest request that Mrs. Fosterton would favour him by trying something on the instrument.

"Willingly," replied the lady; "but remember, Mr. Lee, that I played the other morning for you, for more than an hour, and you are yet in my debt."

"Do play something Mr. Lee," cried Miss Mellworth, approaching the group around the piano. "I am dying to hear you sing," she added, "and now don't be so cruel as to keep me longer in suspense."

"I should be quite afraid to sing before you," returned the young man, naturally enough. "When people are dying to hear anything, they are sure to be disappointed, and equally sure to criticise."

"Is he not very provoking?" cried Miss Mellworth, turning to Mrs. Fosterton; "come, join me in a duet, and under cover of your good playing, let me reassure this timid performer he has nothing to fear from me."

And with an arch look towards Captain Gardner, Miss Mellworth sat down to the instrument; that gentleman nodded his head despondingly towards where the young curate stood, while Mrs. Fosterton good naturedly joined her young friend in a duet.

And then after, Mr. Lee played an air of Beethoven, and sang and played from Rossini, while the fashionable, exacting, and admired Miss Mellworth, sang some of her most witching ballads in return, and for the rest of the evening flirted with, and flattered without blushing, the young curate of Fosterton.

"I have engaged the services of a prompter for our

rehearsal to morrow," she said, carelessly, to Mr. Fosterton, when about to retire.

"You don't mean to say," returned he quickly, "that you have already snared the young curate?"

"Why, not quite yet," returned the best private actress in England; "he is only obliging enough to come over to morrow to prompt me, in learning my part. Who knows what an 'inspired' wish to please may accomplish?"

And she extended her fairy hand towards Captain Gardner, a sort of tacit "good night!" The answering pressure of his, told, how fervently he appreciated her fascinating power.

"How could you, Laura," said her sister, after their maid left them for the night, "befool as you did that nice interesting looking young man? he really plays and sings uncommonly well, and I am sure is very well disposed, but I think it was very mischievous of you to flatter him, and take so much notice of him as you did."

Miss Mellworth laughed long and heartily, apparently much amused.

"He'll recover it in due course of time," she at length said; "it will be only a pleasant epoch in his life; and Captain Gardner had his heart so set on securing his reverence as a prompter, that I could not deny him such an innocent piece of amusement; besides, he had a heavy bet with Mr. Fosterton on my powers of persuasion, and it would be very ungracious of me not to exert them to let Captain Gardner win."

"I would let him win, or lose, as he liked," returned Julia Mellworth; "you may be quite sure Captain Gardner always knows well what he is about. I have an instinctive fear of him," she added; "he has a plot, I think, in all he says, or does."

"A plot!" exclaimed her sister; "what put that into your head?"

"I can hardly tell," returned Julia, "but I do feel Captain Gardner's presence in a room as if I wanted air, or to escape from something. Charley Stamer always

looks confused when he sees him ; and the sight of the man makes me shudder."

"Nonsense!" returned Miss Mellworth, impatiently. "Is it because Captain Gardner is a man of the world, that no one can put out of countenance, not an overgrown boy, like Charley Stamer, that you, Julia, can make blush like a girl, that you are to talk of this divine man as if he were some mysterious plotter, that ought to be shunned?"

Julia was silent, but not convinced, and secretly wished her elder sister, of whom she stood in some awe, could be inspired to shun a man, whom her own instincts told her, was dangerous.

CHAPTER XV.

And when it needed, she could weep and pray ;

Or, if it listed, fawn and flatter ;

Now, smiling smoothly as a summer day,

Now, glooming sadly, so to cloke her matter.

Yet were her words but wind,

And all her tears were water.

FAIRIE QUEEN.

THE next morning's post brought Frank Lee a long and welcome letter from his mother, and an enclosed package from his sister Letty. The maternal letter, contrary to his wont, Frank read first; it contained much affectionate and Christian counsel, as well as kind thought, for her son's comfort and welfare, detailing that a hamper, well filled with many little domestic comforts, was on the road down by the carrier, with a parcel in it from Letty, the contents of which were to be kept a profound secret, until it was opened by himself, but which, his indulgent parent could not refrain from anticipating the pleasurable surprise, by telling him in her letter, of the six beautiful dress shirts, Letty had just finished, with cambric fronts of the finest quality, and embroidered by her own hands, with a neatness and finish that could not be surpassed—the dozen cambric bands that accompanied them were supplied and stitched by the pretty fingers of a fair friend of his, and the name, she would leave him to guess. The postscript contained the chief news of Wimbledon Terrace, winding up with, "that they had dined the day before at Mr. Elmore's; everything, as usual, in good style."

Frank smiled at his mother's idea of "good style,"

when he remembered Mr. Elmore's plain, substantial dinner, at five o'clock, neatly served, with a parlour maid as attendant; and his thoughts wandered in the direction of eight o'clock, at Fosterton Park, the day before, when he dined *à la Russe*, off brilliant china, and polished plate; midst flowers, and sparkling wines, and rare fruits, and gorgeous lights, surrounded by London footmen, to anticipate his slightest want; and the young man's smile partook somewhat of a sneer, as he thought of his dear mother's inexperience in those matters: however, he read on, and the neat paragraph slightly startled the self-satisfied expression his countenance wore, when reflecting on his newly acquired superiority over his old-fashioned parent. "The foreign gentleman," the postscript went on to say, "who lodged with them, and occupied his (Frank's) bedroom, and reading closet, gave no trouble in the house, and was a particular friend of Mr. Smythe, the clergyman, and with him, was of the dinner party at Mr. Elmore's, and spoke English wonderfully well for a foreigner, and seemed greatly to be liked, and admired Mary Elmore's style of drawing in crayon, and was to give her some instruction; he was quite a favorite with both her father and Mrs. Elmore."

Frank bit his lip, and tore open Letty's package; it gave the history of the foreign gentleman nearly in full, as well as various, and many reasons, that induced her mother to receive him as a lodger, and give up to him her son's vacant room.

"Everything was getting very high-priced," mentioned the thrifty Letty, "and some of her own pupils had been withdrawn, in consequence of their parents' removing from the neighbourhood; and Mr. Smythe, the clergyman, who always took such an interest in their affairs, advised her mother to take his foreign friend to lodge with her, who was studying, under his direction, a course of theology, intending to become a minister of the Church of England; that he had, also, letters from a French engineer, well known to Mr. Elmore, introducing him as a most estimable person to that gentleman. In

fact, Mrs. Lee had disposed of Frank's bedroom, and pleasant closet, without consulting him on the subject ; but Letty assured him that he could always have a spare bed at the Elmores,' when he came up, which, she hoped, would be soon : and she thought he would like the foreigner very much ; that he drew, and painted delightfully, was a great reader, and, she was sure, a good musician, though he would neither play nor sing, was very grave in his manner, and looked, at times, very sad, but seemed to enjoy, greatly, an excursion Mr. Elmore took them, up to the top of the mountain at Dundrum, Mrs. Elmore, the children, Mary, and herself, when the foreigner amused himself, and entertained them greatly, botanizing ; and Mary sent him (Frank) the wild flowers she had gathered on that occasion, and hoped, in some of his solitary walks, when visiting the poor through his parish, Frank would arrange a woodland *bouquet* in return, a memento that an old friend was not forgotten for new faces at Fosterton."

Why did Frank Lee crush the simple flowers he held in his hand ? Was it because he thought his mother's foreign lodger first noticed their wild beauties, and discoursed learnedly and botanically on their different species, while Mary Elmore stood by, and listened approvingly ? or, was it that he felt his *amour propre* mortified by another, so quickly, being installed in his favorite rooms, and being received as *un garçon du maison* by the father of Mary Elmore ? Who knows ? But Mr. Frank Lee assured himself that he felt dissatisfied with the way he had spent the evening before, and that, however Mary Elmore might enjoy the society of a stranger, his own fealty to her should never admit of being questioned.

He drew his writing desk towards him, and wrote a short and civil excuse for not attending Miss Mellworth during the morning's rehearsal, and taking up his hat to procure a messenger, remembered that an old, feeble parishioner, the father of one of Mr. Fosterton's game-keepers, who resided with his son in the upper wood of

the park, he had not visited for some time; and Frank Lee strolled in that direction, with Mary Elmore's wild flowers safely deposited in his waistcoat pocket.

The old wood-ranger was delighted to see his Parish minister, and Frank talked and prayed with him until he had nearly forgotten why he chose the Park woods that morning for the scene of his ministerial labours.

The beauty and holiness of Christian faith this young man could sincerely admire; but his heart had never been brought under its influence, and though he could appreciate the peaceful duties of his profession, still it was, that in his own mind they were associated with the image of her who was to be his future companion.

The lovers did not correspond, it being contrary to Mr. Elmore's wishes; "love-letters," he said, "never made young people more constant, and often interfered with every-day duties. Mary and Frank would hear of each other constantly through his mother and sister; and when they were married, next year, there must be no love-letters to be burnt."

Frank Lee, as he hummed one of Mary Elmore's favourite ballads, strolled through the Park wood; now and then a dried crisp leaf fell here and there in his path, to remind him summer flowers were gone; he thought of the twin brother he had loved so dearly, a bud nipped off in the spring tide; and of the aged man he had just visited, a sapless and withered leaf, spared by the autumnal blast on life's bough, to fall by slow but sure decay; companionless, in the frost and snow of old age's dreary winter.

"What is life?" asked the young clergyman of his own heart, as he stooped to pull up a lichen, beautiful and bright, that grew in his path; the response was the word of the wise man—"Vanity."

And Frank Lee sighed as he said aloud—

"There is nothing certain in this world but decay." Why should I sometimes wish," he said to himself, "that I was born in a higher sphere? Why should I envy those who are? Life, even the longest, is truly but

a 'vapour.' My mother is right to live for that world which is to be our abiding home, should be our main object in this."

And the words of his Christian parent's letter were at that moment her son's own convictions.

"Mary," he thought again to himself, as his eye rested on the bunch of bright lichen he held in his hand, "I will not send you flowers that fade; the fresh green enduring beauties of this lowly plant are like your own sweet humble Christian graces, worth all the gaudy flowers that flaunt their hour in that heartless hot-bed—the world's garden."

Frank Lee was at that moment sincere; but gay voices were in the wood, and as he passed an opening glade, Miss Mellworth and Captain Gardner were in sight, followed by her sister, the three Miss Shuffells, and his old acquaintance, Charley Stamer.

The *prima donna* of the Fosterton theatricals at once discovered him.

"Rehearsing in the wood, Mr. Lee?" exclaimed she; "Captain Gardner and I heard it all; who could have thought you were so unsocial," and she laid much emphasis on the pronoun. "as to desert a goodly company for the wild, wild woods; or so ungallant," she added, in a low meaning tone, "as to fly from a lady 'in her utmost need,' for the selfish enjoyment of your own thoughts?"

The young curate assured her "that he had been paying a Parish visit to an old and feeble man, who was unable to come to church, and that duty alone prevented his not keeping his engagement that morning."

"I am glad to see you, Lee," cried Charley Stamer, as he came up, shaking his old class-fellow heartily by the hand; "somebody told Miss Mellworth—I believe your messenger let out to Captain Gardner—that you were in the wood, and here we have been 'over bank, bush, and scaur,' to capture your reverence."

"You will make the young man too vain," observed Captain Gardner, eyeing young Stamer with not a pleasant kind of glance.

"Fie!" cried Miss Mellworth, affecting a confusion of manner the consummate actress never felt. "How can you, Mr. Stamer, tell such things of me; I had an instinct that I should meet Mr. Lee in the wood, but no more; and I have an impulse," she added, as they walked on, "to seize on that beautiful lichen we found you moralising over."

Captain Gardner had dropt to the rear, and was telling young Stamer "the wood was full of cocks;" while he pointed out to Julia Mellworth a delicate wreath of ivy, that circled an old ash tree, "so charming for a lady's dinner toilette;" and the three Miss Shuffells stopped to capture the prize.

Miss Mellworth's hand was stretched towards the garland she coveted, but Frank Lee held back the lichen from her grasp, as he said, while his cheek coloured slightly—

"This bunch is bespoke, Miss Mellworth. Allow me to look for another for you."

Mr. Frank Lee knew nothing of a coquette's heart, but he had evoked its full powers by the simple admission he had just made, and as he parted from his charming companion at the lodge gate, that opened on the high road leading to the Village of Fosterton, the bunch of lichen plucked for Mary Elmore, was in Miss Mellworth's hand, while she archly whispered—

"You will find a note from Mrs. Fosterton at your lodgings, and an eye that will mark your coming in the drawing-room, at eight o'clock."

That evening, as Mr. Frank Lee made his bow to Mrs. Fosterton, his glance sought another fair lady, who was absent; the young curate modestly fell back, and his eye strayed around in vain for the fair syren, whose spell had brought him there. The door of an ante-room opened near him, and there stood the object of his thoughts, leaning against its frame-work, in an attitude of graceful ease, quietly surveying the groups within.

She was dressed with studied simplicity; white tarlatan floated round her exquisitely-moulded figure, without

ornament of any kind to take off from its faultless symmetry, and in the rich, voluminous braids of her beautiful and glossy hair was a bunch of lichen. A circlet of diamonds, of the purest water, of extraordinary beauty and value, glittered on her ungloved arm, which now was placed by this high-born actress, gently resting on the young curate of Fosterton's black coated sleeve, as they moved to the dining-room.

The morning's rehearsal, at Captain Gardner's request and suggestion, had been postponed until the evening: need we add, that the gentleman who took Miss Mellworth in to dinner, acted as her prompter on the occasion.

CHAPTER XVI.

————— to rehearse,
Day after day, scraps of prose and verse,
To bear each other's spirit, pride, and spite,
To hide in rant the heart-ache of the night,
To dress in gaudy patch-work, and to force
The mind to think in the appointed course,
This is laborious, and may be defined
The bootless labour of the thriftless mind.

CRABBE.

MRS. Fosterton was in a tumult of delight, as the theatrical plot thickened ; with a constant demand on her attention, she was everywhere planning, consulting, overseeing stage decorations, drop scenes, dresses for the various characters imported from London, shifting scene-boards and becoming foot-lights, while she now altered a score, or changed a symphony ; her presence was ubiquitous.

Half a dozen officers of the ——— Guards, friends of Captain Gardner's, had arrived, first-rate actors in their way, and Mr. Fosterton was nearly as delighted as his wife, for he enjoyed a good deal of bye play with his military friends, when off the stage, and "seven's the main" might be heard in his study up to a very late hour every night.

The long wished for evening at last arrived—the house of Fosterton Park was full of visitors. Cards had been issued on an extensive scale, and but few apologies had been received.

Miss Mellworth and Mrs. Fosterton had privately decided, from the first, on Rossini's opera of "Il Barbiere

di Siviglia;" there were but two principal female characters to support in the piece, and those ladies, as *Rosina* and *Bertha*, left no laurels to be gained by the rest of the lady amateurs.

"Julia can look pretty and lady-like," observed her engrossing sister, "in some part where no acting is required; in fact, a clever delineation is not her *forte*, she is too natural, but she sings with much purity of style, and will not shame me, unless she is acting with Captain Gardner, and then she is sure to break down."

The stage was erected in that wing of the building formerly designed by the Fostertons for the projected private chapel, and here a capacious "house," "green-room," and "dressing-rooms" were arranged, at considerable expense, and to complete all in the most artistic style, property-men, from the London theatres, were brought over, to attend to the scenic arrangements and trap-door interests. The dresses were superb, and all was produced with minute attention to stage effect.

Nothing could be more perfect than the acting of Miss Mellworth, while Mr. Fosterton, as *Rosina's* lover, *Count Almaviva*, made love to her after a most fervent fashion; and Captain Gardner, as *Figaro*, in the amusing incidents where the artful plotter bears so considerable a part, sustained the character to admiration.

In that scene between *Rosina* and *Figaro*, where he sings, "What am I? or dost thou mock me?" there never was before, perhaps, produced on any stage anything half so real.

"Just look," whispered Julia Mellworth to her companion, young Stamer, while they peeped from behind a side screen, when *Figaro's* telling voice demanded, "What am I?"

"Could you answer that question?" she asked, earnestly looking into her lover's face. His response was a shudder.

"There is something dreadfully mysterious about that terrible man," she observed gravely, "and, Charles Stamer, you know it."

"Our part is just coming on," cried the young man, hurriedly withdrawing his attention from the stage.

Pretty Julia Mellworth shook her head.

"He is at home in the character of *Figaro*," whispered her companion.

And so thought the audience, for a thundering *encore* greeted his wonderful imitative powers, as the disguised Father Peter sang, with the vivacity of Tagliafico, the celebrated solo, "Room for the city's factotum."

Miss Mellworth was enchanted with his performance, and when she came to that pleasing *scena*, "*Una voce poco fa*," her full powers were put forward to elicit admiration from a man without a heart—a Jesuit priest; while the other Churchman present, who acted as *Rosina's* prompter, grew wild with excitement, as the talented actress rendered the thrilling *aria* with a brilliant execution intended to captivate his rival; but Frank Lee's intense love of music, and the vanity of his own unrenewed heart, left him powerless to resist the fascination of this accomplished and gifted girl: the wish of his soul at that moment was, to act and sing something worthy of her notice and applause.

How closely approximated are men of all creeds, when devoid of vital religion!

Major Grantley, one of the officers of the — Dragoons, who had come from Dublin, as the Doctor of Music, not only sang well, but contributed not a little to the humour of the Opera, by the singular manner in which he was attired. He wore a long broad and eccentric-looking hat, a pair of prodigious white bands pendant from his neck, and a belt and clasp of extensive dimensions, while he gave, with much force and dramatic effect, Rossini's graphic description of calumny; and Mr. Fosterton, in that scene where *Almaviva*, to obtain an interview with *Rosina*, simulates the drunken soldier, was successful in imposing, at least on his own two boys, who sought out the steward, Mat Carey, amongst the audience, "to have that beastly man turned out of the house."

Mrs. Fosterton, as *Bertha*, was dressed inimitably,

and her acting was graceful and correct; but she evidently was "out of spirits or humour," whispered Miss Mellworth to Captain Gardner, "at our moderate success."

But Captain Gardner had studied the character of his hostess too closely to allow her to be eclipsed by a more practised actress.

In the *Extravaganza* that was to follow, written expressly by the Jesuit for the beautiful and impassioned Mrs. Fosterton, "The Witch's Cauldron," all scenery, traps, changes, and dresses, except the *spirituelle* part, of the dazzling and lovely being who, with supernatural power, evokes the presence of bright and fairy spirits from a land beyond the skies, while the demon who rules the witch herself, and teaches her the black art of his mysterious *scéance*, is overcome and subdued by the gushing melody of his pupil, and to exhibit to her his full power in a scene of horrors, reveals the damned. The sublime pathos of the witch's voice, and her matchless invocation of a greater power, startle the demon, and singing a *solo* of thrilling agony, the damned spirit sinks into "the cauldron," from whence the released damned arise.

Then the exquisite incantation of the beautiful, and now all-powerful witch takes place, while she summons the mighty spirit to come forth at her command, and the saved demon arises in spotless white, radiant and beautiful, to be borne to the skies.

"I never saw such acting as Mrs. Fosterton's," said Miss Mellworth, as she stood taking some refreshment at the supper-table.

"It was not acting, it was reality," returned the gentleman she addressed. "I never shall forget her in the last scene, as she looked into the cauldron, nothing short of an inspired belief was in the ecstatic beauty of the intensity of that look; and then, her voice in the incantation, it was the very music of the soul; no wonder," he added, smiling, "that it transformed a demon into an angel; it would make me, a poor weak mortal, believe

anything, and from henceforth found the eternity of punishment."

Miss Mellworth looked up in Frank Lee's face, and saw plainly there her own spell over him was broken.

"A kindred spirit to his own enthusiastic nature," she rightly thought, "is the worst to rule that young man's destiny." And the unknown actress turned to the gentleman who stood near her, saying quietly, "Can you tell me, Major Gardner, who the demon was? I thought it was Captain Gardner, at first, the figure was so disguised in that horrible black drapery, but though he is a wizard in his way, even Mrs. Fosterton's exquisite singing could not have transformed him into that calm Madonna face we saw floated into Heaven."

"Oh! it was not Gardner," returned the Major, "for he was beside me, amongst the audience. I regret to say the demon and I are not acquainted, but the part was sustained admirably."

"It came upon me quite a surprise," returned Miss Mellworth, in a tone of slight pique: "Mrs. Fosterton kept the 'Witches Cauldron' all to herself, until it was produced, to throw 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia' quite in the shade; even little Louise did not blab, though she must have rehearsed her part pretty often, to act the sprite so well."

Mrs. Fosterton here entered the supper-room, in her witch's dress, her beautiful face radiant with excitement, set off by the careless and becoming drapery of the ample black veil, whose graceful folds partially concealed her statue-like head. Diamonds, set as stars, sparkled in the stomacher of her dress, and others shone brightly through the raven ringlets that clustered around her transparent brow, while the deep violet shade of her brilliant eyes, richly contrasted with the dark silken lashes that rested on a cheek varying with every emotion.

All crowded round the fair witch, to express their congratulations at such dazzling success, and her two noble looking boys, and the little Louise, still dressed as "fairy sprites," came in for a share of the unbounded admiration expressed on all sides.

Was there no spiritual watchman to reprove, exhort, or warn the Fosterton family of the soul-destroying dangers of the flowery path along which they so recklessly sported? Was there no faithful minister to dash the poison cup of adulation from their lips? Their worldly rector visited and dined daily with them, replenishing the poison-cup of praise with an unsparing hand. "The night of the play" the Dean of Grimly satisfied his conscience by remaining snugly in his library, at the Deanery, writing letters, in consequence of the death of a Bishop he hoped to succeed; while his daughters, as chorus girls in the opera of "*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*," made their *début* on the stage, and his curate——

"Do tell me, Mrs. Fosterton, who that wondrous demon may be?" was Mr. Frank Lee's request of the "*Cauldron's Witch*," when she motioned him to sit beside her, in the ball-room.

"Do play me one of your charming polkas," was the reply, "those men are playing execrably, and I shall satisfy your curiosity; but remember, it is a secret."

The polka was played, the promise of secrecy made, and Mrs. Fosterton whispered in her victim's ear——

"The governess!"——

CHAPTER XVII.

Whence are we?—Whither do we tend?—How do we feel
and reason?

How strange a thing is man—a spirit saturating clay!

PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.


“AFTER a storm comes a calm,” said the Steward of Mr. Fosterton to a young gentleman, who overtook him in the grounds of the Park. “So, Sir, you are going to spend a quiet day with Mr. Warner, after all the racketting and upsetting of last night?”

“Just so,” answered young Stamer, smiling, “I never can sleep long in a morning, after raking; I must get up at my usual hour, and everybody else is to be invisible until lunch time.”

“That’s just Mr. Warner’s dinner hour, Sir,” returned the old Steward, “and I’ll engage his Reverence won’t let you stir without dining; there’s not a more hospitable gentleman in the country than the Reverend Mr. Warner, to both rich and poor.”

“Oh! I suppose I’ll have to dine with him to-day,” replied his companion, carelessly; “you know my father and Sir Charles are great friends of his.”

“Indeed they are, Sir, this thirty years,” said the Steward, “they are much of the same stamp as his Reverence; I have often seen them with him, staying at the Glebe; and I don’t think, Sir, there’s a better judge of horseflesh in Ireland than your uncle, Sir Charles: I sold him two good horses in my day, and he gave a sporting price for them, but they were worth it. But what signifies, Sir,” he added, after a pause, “what sum of money a gentleman gives for a horse, so that he don’t bet on



him, and lose his fortune, amongst scamps and jockeys. Your uncle, Sir, is not that sort; Sir Charles is fond of hunting, and can well afford it, and I often wish Mr. Fosterton here would take to fox hunting, and give up all the foreign *gew-gaws* he spends his time and money after."

Charley Stamer, who, of old, knew Mat Carey entertained a strong opinion on this subject, laughed heartily.

"You'd have no play-acting, Mr. Carey," observed he, trying to compose his face.

"Not a bit of it, Sir," returned Mat, firmly. "Look at the oceans of money, Mr. Stamer, that's spent for nothing, I may say, and worse than nothing; why, it took a fortune, Sir, to bring over those fellows, who turned the whole place upside down, erecting that Theatre: and the bare dresses, they tell me, that came from London, would take a half-year's rent of the best town-land on his estate; and for what, Sir?" asked Mr. Carey, in an indignant tone of voice, stopping in his walk, "for a set of gentlemen and ladies making mummers of themselves, singing and spouting, not like Christian, Godfearing people at all, but like Play-actors; Mr. Fosterton himself, before the whole country, and his own servants, so like a drunken soldier, that Mr. Vere and Mr. Redmond both came to me, to turn that beastly man out of the house!—their own father! Ah! Mr. Stamer, if you had known their grandfather! Your uncle, Sir Charles, and your father, Sir, knew him well. Why, if show people, in his day, came into the village below, acting and tomfooling that way, he'd have sent me round to the tenants to warn them, and forbid anybody going near them; and would never stop himself until he hunted them out of the town."

"He admired the Drama, then, I suppose, about as much as you do, Mr. Carey," remarked Charley Stamer, laughing, while he took out a cigar, and applied a fuse.

"He was a good man, Sir," returned the Steward, emphatically, "and knew well every tenant on his estate; and spent his time among them, too, improving his pro-

perty. and seeing there was not a bad member on it; why. Sir, he was a real Christian man, and had the fear and love of God in his heart. He often said to me, 'Example, Mat, is better than precept;' and sure enough, he set them all a good example. At the beginning of every winter, he went through every poor man's house in the village, and could tell often, better than myself, who wanted blankets and firing; and his heart, Sir, was in the schools: 'Give them, when young,' he often said, 'the word of God, and when they're old they won't depart from it.'"

"The present proprietor of Fosterton is an exception to that rule," drily remarked his companion, emitting a huge puff of smoke.

"His mother spoiled him. Mr. Stamer," returned Mat Carey, "she let him do as he liked, and he lost his poor father when he was too young to learn his ways; and his guardians, Sir (giving Mr. Stamer a very expressive look), between you and I, were none of the best, Sir: and then, when he married—"

Here the old Steward stopt short.

"Now, you old codger," cried young Stamer, standing still, catching the old Steward familiarly by the collar with one hand, while he held his lighted cigar between the thumb and forefinger of the other, "what fault can you find with the beautiful 'witch of the cauldron?' She always says 'Fosterton could not be carried on without Mat Carey;' and I always thought you were a man of taste, Mr. Mat, and admired its beautiful mistress as much as everybody else does."

"I am not fond of finding fault, Mr. Stamer," replied the privileged and faithful old heir loom, disengaging his collar from the grasp of a young gentleman, who had worried him often when a boy. "Mrs. Fosterton, I think myself, is a wonderful lady, and," added he, as they resumed their walk, "has wit and beauty enough to be a queen; but she would have been a better woman, Sir, if she had married such a man as her sister's husband, Lord Drydale, and it would have been very well indeed, for Mr.

Fosterton and his Tenantry, if he fancied the eldest sister instead of the youngest; then, Sir, with such a lady as Lady Drydale is, at the head of the Fosterton Estates, we'd have a different parish, I guess, to what it is. Her sister would never have ruined poor Dean Shuffell, by putting him in a post he was not fit for, running head and ears in debt, to keep up his dignity as a Dean, Sir, and helter skelter after one great man or another, trying to get a Bishoprick, to pay for all. With the parish, Mr. Stamer"—and here Mat Carey looked ominously grave—"left to mind itself, I may say, gone fair to the mischief, the schools open one week and shut up the next, the sick poor never visited or looked after by their minister, and the Rector of the Parish, Sir, when he gets up into the pulpit, nobody minds him, for everybody knows his heart is not in it, and half the congregation are asleep, and far worse than even that," added the old man, with a very mysterious look, "he didn't do his duty by the family here, Sir, never teaches the Bible to the young gentlemen, or tries to turn their papa and mamma from the Popish tricks they learnt in foreign parts, but brings down a curate to dress up the church like a mass house to please them, and one of our own ministers trying to corrupt the schools. Oh, Mr. Stamer! who'd have believed it, in old Mr. Fosterton's time? But we soon sent this Popish clergyman to the right about; you never saw anything like it, Sir, man, woman, and child stood up, and walked out of the church with the Bible in their hands; poor Dean Shuffell was to be pitied, for he was scandalized throughout the whole parish; but our churchwarden crowned it all;" continued Mat Carey, in a voice of exultation, 'for mark you,' says he to the Dean, 'if you dare attempt to put a rushlight, not to say a candle, on the Communion Table, I'll pitch it out with my own hands through the window.' "And I'll be bound there was no change after that," continued the old man with a chuckle, "attempted in the church of Fosterton, for the Dean knew well who he had to deal with, a man (not like himself) that never broke his word."

"Well, it's all right now, I suppose?" remarked the young gentleman, still puffing away at his cigar.

"Far from it, Mr. Stamer," returned his companion, "the Church, to be sure, is just as it was, in *statu quo*, but look at the present curate, Sir, we all thought he was a real blessing to the parish, when he came down first, so mild and so Christianlike in his manner, everybody was taken with him, and he preached the Gospel so plain, that there wasn't a child or an old woman in the church, that didn't understand him; but when once Mrs. Fosterton blew his brains out, asking him to dinner here every day, he playing and singing for her and her company every night, the servants tell me, how can he attend to his duties Sir?" asked Mr. Carey indignantly. "The young man has not half time enough to be at this, that, and the other, to humour a lady that (between you and I, Sir,) changes her mind every half hour, not to say going through the parish instructing the ignorant in the Word of God, and keeping his flock from harm; in such times as these, Sir, with the wolf at the door, and signs on, the priests are busy enough, and many a one is beginning to say, they're more in earnest than the clergymen that know the truth, and won't practise it."

"Well, I suppose they are," said Charles Stamer, finishing his cigar.

"To be sure they are," cried the old Steward, "these gentlemen are never asleep on their post, for their master is going about as a 'roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour,' and they never neglect his work, drawing people's minds from trusting in our blessed Saviour, who died for our sins, to depend upon holy water, and holy ashes; Saint's bones, and lighted candles, in their hands, when they are dying, to save their souls; and the priests can forgive them all their sins, if they can muster the ten shillings to pay for the mass that is to bring them out of purgatory."

"Truth," they say, "lies in a well," said young Stamer thoughtfully, "I suppose it is, that people must dig very deep before they find it."

"Read the Bible, Sir," replied the old Steward quickly; "in the word of God is the hidden treasure, the deeper you dig, Sir, the richer the mine; he that runs may read. Our own hearts, as well as the Scriptures, tell us that of ourselves we can do no good thing; and our Lord himself says, 'He that believeth on me shall never perish,' and, 'no man,' says he, 'shall pluck them out of my hand.' So that, if our clergymen, Sir, trusted entirely to their Saviour's merits, instead of book-learning, and looked to him for help to cleanse their own sinful hearts, they would be true to their own master, Sir, and not sconce the work he put them at, over his flock, to see that none go astray, or that their enemy, the Devil, should not pluck the sheep out of the Shepherd's hand, by persuading them to follow the word of sinful men, like themselves, instead of the Bible Sir, that is God's own written word, to guide sinners into the knowledge of all truth."

"You'd have made a capital preacher, Mr. Carey," observed young Stamer, attempting to laugh.

"Like Timothy of old," answered the old man proudly, "I knew the Scriptures from my youth, and I daily feed on the bread of life, which is the word of God, and when things go wrong, Sir, I turn to the law and the testimony, and I see there written for my instruction, as plain as a pike staff, 'This is the way, walk ye in it,' and if our new curate did the same, Sir, he wouldn't be, as I am told, behind the scenes last night, encouraging others in the way of folly; No!" said the old man emphatically, "he'd be up and doing his master's business, as old Mat Carey is, late and early, that his earthly master's property should not suffer through his Steward's folly, or neglect."

"You are quite right, Mr. Mat," returned his companion, "but here we are at the Lake, and I see the young gentlemen standing at the Boat-house waiting for you."

"That they are, Sir," returned the old man, cheerfully, "I did not reckon on their getting out so early this morning, after all they went through last night, but

young blood, Sir, is not easily cooled, and they must be at something."

The young Fostertons shouted for him "to hurry," as soon as they perceived him coming.

"Fair and easy, my young gentlemen," cried Mat, with a dry short laugh, "on the Lake, my fine fellows, you can't get without the key of the Boat-house, and old Mat Carey must take his time," mumbled the warden of the boat to himself.

"My way, I think, Mr. Mat, is across the copse yonder, and so on to the lower Lodge, next the Village?" said young Stamer, "am I right?"

"As straight as the barrel of a gun, Sir," replied Mr. Carey. "How well you remember the short cut, Sir; why, you know the grounds better, Mr. Stamer, than the gentleman who owns them;" and the old man sighed.

"I never forget anything," said his companion, and his thoughts reverted to all the Steward had been just saying. "Good day, Mr. Carey," he added, civilly, as he struck into another path.

"Good morning, Sir, and I'm very much obliged to you, Sir, for your company so far," returned the old man, respectfully.

Then he muttered to himself, as he walked down towards the Boat-house, "A fine young man he's grown up, and a fine, cheerful, open way about him, just like his uncle, Sir Charles; I hope he has none of the mother's blood in him, a rank Papist, though she lets her children go to Church. Who knows," mused Mr. Mat Carey, "what she teaches them in private, at any rate," thought he with a chuckle. "A word in season, even coming from an ignorant body, does no harm, and I took care not to mince matters when I spoke about reading the Bible. That, and that only, is the sword of the Spirit, to cut away Popish inventions."

CHAPTER XVIII.

For character groweth day by day, and all things aid it in unfolding.

The scarred and crooked oak will tell of thee for centuries to come.

TUPPER.

“I thought you’d never come, Mat Carey,” said the elder Boy, impatiently.

“I had a great many things to look after this morning, Master Fosterton,” said the old Steward, rather gruffly.

“Well, come now, Mr. Carey,” cried Redmond Fosterton, “and get the boat out for us on the Lake, Harper will be able to pull it out with you, and my head is aching so, I long to be on the water.”

“I can do it without Harper’s assistance,” returned the old Steward, with a slight shade of contempt in his voice, as he named the young gentleman’s attendant, “and he can stay,” resumed he, “on the bank, until I give ye a sail round the Lake.”

Master Fosterton proposed bringing Harper, but it was negatived, in a very decided tone, by Mr. Carey.

“Ye are always fidgetty,” he observed, “when Harper is with ye, and as I am in charge of your lives on the water, so ye must do as I desire, or do without a sail for to day.”

Master Fosterton grumbled a good deal at not taking his favorite, Harper, but seeing Mr. Carey about to leave the Boat-house, jumped into the punt his Brother was already seated in. The old Steward got in leisurely, and, taking up an oar, got the boat into deep water.

“How pleasant and cool it is,” said Redmond, passing his delicate-looking hand over his fevered brow, “I’d

like to lie under the water all day, like the lilies there, my head is burning so."

His Brother glanced a sulky look towards him, but made no reply.

"You'd find it cooler, I'm thinking," observed Mr. Carey, "than you did the sulphur pot last night, where you got your head-ache dancing round."

"Do you mean the Witches' Cauldron?" asked Master Fosterton, in a disdainful tone.

"Yes," returned the old Steward, coolly, "the fire of purgatory in a small way, where the Spirits of the Damned were turned into Angels of Light."

"You're only laughing at it, Mr. Carey," cried Redmond Fosterton.

"He may laugh as he likes," said Master Fosterton, consequentially, "but a more learned person than he is thinks that prayers and invocations can bring a soul out of purgatory."

"It must first get in there to be brought out," returned Mr. Carey, drily, while he repeated slowly—

"Just as the tree, cut down, that fell

"To North or Southward—there it lies;

"So man departs to Heaven, or Hell,

"Fixed in the state wherein he dies."

"No matter what verses you repeat," observed Master Fosterton, impudently, "people's souls do go into purgatory, and as mamma sung them, out of the cauldron, last night, so do prayers and good works take them out of purgatory, when the fire there cleanses them from all sin, just as the demon's black robes were turned white going up to Heaven."

"Master Fosterton," said the old man, solemnly, "the Word of God says nothing of purgatory, the Bible speaks but of two characters, the righteous and the wicked, and of two future states, or houses for them to occupy hereafter, Heaven and Hell; Purgatory is only a Popish invention," continued the Steward "to make money, by saying masses to bring the poor soul out of where it never was. Did you ever hear, Sir, of 'no Money no

Mass?' and do you remember, Sir, what was said by Saint Peter to Simon the sorcerer? 'Thy money perish with thee, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God?'"

"Mrs. Felton taught me a verse," cried Redmond, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours.'

"Well remembered, Master Redmond," cried Mr. Carey, gleefully, "resting from labour, sure enough is not purgatory, where Popery says the soul must toil, and burn, and grow better every day; and now I will teach you a verse from Saint John's Gospel," said the old man, dropping his oar, and fixing his eyes affectionately on the beautiful countenance of his little favourite—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation.'

The child repeated the verse after him.

"Now, where there is no condemnation there can be no purgatory," cried the old man, emphatically.

"Come, Redmond, no learning of lessons to-day," cried out the elder brother, "this is to be a holyday from everything but play,"

"But I am not able to play," returned the delicate looking boy, languidly.

"Well, a very clever person that you know well, Redmond, says, it's time enough to learn Scripture when we're old, and that it only puts fusty notions in young people's heads."

"Mrs. Felton was not fusty," remarked Redmond, gravely.

"Oh, but she was not a boy like you and I," returned his brother.

Redmond was silenced; and the old man, who had left the argument between the two boys, now said quietly, addressing himself to Master Fosterton—

"Mrs. Felton was not a boy who is taught to despise God's scripture, or letter, to sinful man for his guidance; she was a Christian woman who loved you, and your

brother, and sister dearly, and loved to bring you up in the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ, whom he sent to give light to them that sat in darkness, and to give sight to the blind; but your present governess—this clever person you wouldn't name, Sir—would put out your eyes, and make you blind, put her finger in them, by keeping ye from learning the Bible, that ought to be 'a lamp to your feet,' and would bring you, Sir, into the narrow road that leads to a better world than this."

The boy coloured, and looked abashed.

"Miss Herbert has nothing to do with me," returned he, "and Redmond and I are to be taught by a Tutor; but I can tell you, Mr. Mat Carey, mamma says Miss Herbert is the cleverest person she ever met, and everybody is dying to know who the Demon is—she did her part so well."

"Humph," grunted the old Steward, "it would not be easy to tell, may be."

The boys looked surprised.

"Oh, we know all about it," said the elder boy, "Redmond and myself, and Louise, and mamma and papa, and Captain Gardner; but we three made a vow not to tell, and Miss Herbert held an ebony cross, with a figure on it, in her hand, while we promised."

"And you have broken your vow," cried Redmond, "for you've let out who the Demon is to Mr. Carey."

His brother looked frightened.

"I knew it before," cried the old Steward, "but when you made a promise, Master Fosterton, you should have kept it: and it was very wrong of your governess to bring a bit of black wood, in the shape of a cross, to witness what ye promised, when the Lord, who hears everything, was listening to what ye said."

Both boys looked down.

"Oh!" at length exclaimed the elder brother, "Miss Herbert is a half Italian, and worships God as they do in the beautiful churches at Rome, that I often was in, with papa and mamma. You never saw, Mat Carey, such

a place in your life ; all mosaic and pictures, and the images covered with gold and jewels, and such lights before the shrines, it would dazzle your eyes."

"The work of men's hands," cried out the Bible-reading Mr. Carey. "Can gold or jewels make the graven image see, or hear, Sir? The word of God says, 'They have eyes, and they see not, and ears, and they hear not, and they that make them, are like unto them, and so are all they that put their trust in them;' and it was a crying shame for those," he continued, "who took children like ye into a place of Idols, instead of teaching ye the Second Commandment, God himself wrote with his own finger, for his own people."

"Mrs. Felton taught it to me, Mr. Carey, out of the 20th chapter of Exodus," cried Redmond.

"She taught it to me, too," remarked Master Fosterton, pertly, and he commenced rapidly repeating, 'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or the likeness of anything that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the water under the Earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, or worship them, for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the Father upon the Children, unto the third and fourth generation, and show mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.'"

"Right well remembered, Master Fosterton," cried the old Steward; "but always, Sir, repeat God's word slowly, with due reverence. And now, Sir, why didn't you tell your governess of this Second Commandment, when she brought a graven image to witness your promise, and repeat for her this awful command of a jealous God against making a graven image, bowing down to it or worshipping it, the only sin the Lord threatened to punish from one generation to another?"

"I'll do it," cried the boy, boastfully, "I'll do it the next time I see her kissing and bowing down before that black cross."

"Yes, Vere," observed Redmond, "or before the image of the Virgin and Child, that's on the altar, in the

room where she teaches Louise her lessons ; when we go in to read our Italian, we can repeat it for her."

"You'll see what fun I'll have," cried the elder brother, exultingly.

"I'll take the graven image, and break it's nose. What a rumpus won't she be in, when her little gods are broken about !"

The boy laughed mischievously, and the old man chuckled, over the projected sacrilege.

"Take care, Vere," cried Redmond, mysteriously, "how you meddle with Miss Herbert's gods : she can raise the dead whenever she likes."

"Oh no, she cannot," replied Vere, dogmatically ; "she can only talk to the spirits of the dead."

"And she'll desire them to come to you at night, if you vex her," replied Redmond, in a tone of warning.

"I don't care," returned his brother ; "I'll pull the graven images about. I'm not a baby, like Louise, that she can put standing in the middle of the room, and make the mesmeric passes at, so as to keep her in one spot for an hour. I'd soon run away, if I saw her trying to mesmerise me."

"Oh, but she does it with her eyes," observed Redmond, "and she'd have you doing what she liked, before you knew what she's about, in spite of your own will."

"I defy her," replied Vere ; "for I'll take care and not look at those awful eyes of hers."

"You couldn't help it, though," returned Redmond, perseveringly. "Did you not see her, how she fixed her eyes on mamma's, and had her sitting in her chair as if she were dead ?"

"Oh, but great as her power is," returned the elder boy, "she did not discover where you and I were hid behind the screen."

"I never was so much frightened in all my life," cried Redmond. "She just looked, Vere, like the Ghoul that's in the German tale Count Latowski gave us to read."

Mr. Carey listened in mute amazement.

"God help ye, poor children !" exclaimed he at length ;

“one time ye have a Polish Count for a tutor, that believes in the fairies ; then a heathen of a Cossack, that believes in nothing at all ; and now a Popish governess, to bewitch you into believing false miracles ; and no pastor to look after the lambs,” he added, mournfully ; “but ye have the Bible, poor children, and my dear young gentlemen,” continued their humble old Steward earnestly, gazing on the two bright upturned faces before him, “try the spirits by the Scriptures of Truth, and then may ye defy lying wonders, and never can be brought, like God’s people of old whom he cut off, to bow down before dumb idols.”

CHAPTER XIX.

A sentence had formed a character, and a character subdued a kingdom.

"MY father wrote to me, on no account to leave Fosterton, my good Sir, without seeing you," said Charles Stamer to the venerable looking Mr. Warner, as he met him on the sunny steps of his glebe house at Wellmine.

"And I am very glad to see you, my young friend," replied the old gentleman, heartily shaking him by the hand, "and to hear of my two old valued friends of some forty years' standing, your father and uncle, the former my junior by many years, though we were schoolfellows, but not classfellows," he added confidentially. "They enjoy good health, I trust, and many blessings to be thankful for."

The young man assured him "all was right at Stamer Castle," and that Sir Charles enjoyed "the last winter's hunting as keenly as the most eager sportsman amongst them of five-and-twenty."

"Has he not yet learned to be moderate in all things?" asked Mr. Warner, with a smile.

"Oh, Uncle Charles is very moderate in everything but hunting," returned his nephew; "he thinks his health would break down, if he didn't follow the hounds as he did all his life, at least twice a week during the season."

"Say three times a week," remarked the old gentleman, laughing. "A fine lesson to his nephew," he added, "to form no habits in youth he can't give up without injuring his health in maturer years. I must try and

convince my good friend, Sir Charles, that much valuable time may be lost, even hunting for health."

Young Stamer laughed.

"You dine with me, to-day," said the old gentleman, kindly. "Your old friend, Mrs. Stanley, will be very glad to see you. We dine early, at four o'clock: it answers parish duties better than a later hour; and I am just starting for a walk, and you must come with me, and earn an appetite for our homely fare; but my daughter will be glad to see you: I think she is in her own garden; we will take her on our way."

It was not in his young companion's nature to interfere with so friendly an arrangement, and the aged clergyman led the way to his daughter's pleasure-ground.

It was a beautiful sunny spot, on the well sheltered sloping terrace, at the south side of the glebe house; and here, amidst a world of bright autumn flowers, was the figure of a lady, in deep mourning, weeding some stray intruders out of one of the brilliant *parterres*.

Beside her stood a little girl, about eight years old, with a basket in her hand, in which were some paper bags, filled with different kinds of seed that she had just gathered.

On a rustic bench, at a little distance, was a fine manly looking boy, about two years her senior, deep in the manufacture of a paper kite.

"Jane," said the old gentleman, as he approached the kneeling figure on the smooth green sward of her well kept verdure garden, "here is an old friend with a young face."

The lady addressed looked up, and starting from her stooping posture, coloured slightly, as she saw her father's fashionable looking visitor approach, and extend his hand toward her soiled garden glove.

"I did not know you at first," said Mrs. Stanley, as she drew her gauntlet protector against weeds and clay off a fair and ladylike hand, to receive Charles Stamer's friendly pressure. "But now that I do, I am very glad to see you at Wellmine. I think you have grown

some inches taller than since you were last in this part of the world."

The young man assured her his five feet eleven and a half inches had not been added to since then. "But they tell me I have grown stouter."

"Well, perhaps you have," returned his fair friend; "but Lizzy, I see, remembers you better than I did," as the little girl laid down her basket, and took his hand caressingly between both of hers. "And Robert, too," added Mrs. Stanley, as the boy flung his half formed kite aside, and bounded down the slope, crying out eagerly, "Charley Stamer! Charley Stamer! how glad am I to see you; the kite, now, grand papa, will be finished, though you wouldn't help me;" and the manly boy seized young Stamer's unoccupied hand, and fixed his joyous intelligent eyes on the handsome face of their good natured visitor.

"Oh! fie! Robert," exclaimed his mother, "Mr. Stamer will think you very silly, and very selfish, bespeaking his assistance about your kite the moment you meet him; and quite unceremonious, too," she added. "Remember, Mr. Stamer is not a little boy, Robert, to play with, and address by his Christian name."

"Now do, Mrs. Stanley," cried the young man, "leave Lizzy and Bob to me, to settle points of etiquette with; you can't think how much I enjoy a big boy's holiday, with such unsophisticated play-fellows as my young friends here; we must have them for a walk," and he turned to Mr. Warner to bespeak his assistance. "And now, no more books for to day. Mrs. Stanley, we are to have a regular scamper, from this until dinner."

Both children shouted in merry laughter, regarding their ancient ally with gleeful countenances, full of affection and admiration.

"What says mamma?" asked Mr. Warner, turning to his daughter.

"Lizzy was to write her French exercise after we went in," said that lady, quietly; "and to hem one of your new silk handkerchiefs; and Robert his Latin gram-

mar, and his lessons on the globes. I do not know what to say, father, about this scamper with you and Mr. Stamer."

Both childrens eyes were turned eagerly on their mother's face.

"Oh! fie! mamma," cried the little girl, quickly, "you do know what to say, for I see it in your eyes that you will let us go; and you gave me a double task, yesterday, for not telling the whole truth."

"But you are not to judge mamma by her eyes," observed Mrs. Stanley's son, with a patronising glance towards his mother; "she may be only making up her mind."

"Thank you, Robert, for defending me," cried his parent, laughing; "but Lizzy is right, I had made up my mind to let you both go; and mamma," she added, frankly, "has been very naughty in concealing the truth, even in jest."

Charley Stamer thought of his own mother, and her early inculcation of falsehood on the minds of her children, in order to impose on their other parent.

"And mamma must be punished," said Mr. Warner, "for she must stay at home; I must ask you to be in the way, Jane, to meet," added he, turning to his daughter, "Mr. Lee. Should he come before I return—he promised to come to dinner to day—I wish to see him respecting some matters connected with those poor people who have gone to reside in his parish, and I am anxious should be looked after."

Charley Stamer thought again, and Frank Lee rose up before his mind's eye, playing the night before a gay polka in the ball-room of Fosterton Park; and smiled as he thought, how Mr. Warner's "poor people would be looked after."

"I will stay at home with you, mamma," said Lizzy, in a subdued doleful tone, coming round to her mother's side.

"And console mamma, while undergoing punishment," remarked her grandfather. "But that can't be, either;

and beside, I require your services to carry the little basket for me to old Billy Murphy's."

"And I'll bring the books to the school, grandpapa—wont I?" asked Bob.

"Certainly," returned Mr. Warner; and away flew the boy for the parcel, his mamma called after him, "was on the desk in grandpapa's study."

Lizzy and Mrs. Stanley went in to arrange the contents of the basket.

"I am glad to see Mrs. Stanley looking more cheerful," observed young Stamer, as he and his venerable friend took a turn through the garden.

"She is now resigned," returned her father, "to the will of Him who removed her earthly idol; she can now trace a Heavenly Father's love in the blow that well nigh struck her down to the dust."

"Oh! it was hard to forget such a noble fellow as Colonel Stanley," exclaimed young Stamer. "I remember him so well; he was always so kind to me. The last time I saw him, was when his regiment was quartered in Dublin, about a year before he died. I went with my father to a review in the park, and everybody remarked him, he looked every inch a soldier, manœuvring his men."

"And proved himself a gallant soldier, too," said the old man, "in many a hard-fought field in India; but my dear young friend," added he, with a slight tremor in his voice, "he was something more than a brave and honourable man—he was a Christian—a true soldier of the Cross, 'fighting the good fight of faith,' under the banner of God's Word, warring with his own evil nature within, the pomp and vanity of a world lying in wickedness without, and the seductive snares of that arch apostate, who assumes at will the glittering garb of an Angel of Light."

"It was hard to forget such a man," exclaimed his companion.

"He is not forgotten," returned Mr. Warner, "for 'sweet is the memory of the just,' and his bereaved wife,

in performing the daily duties of life, feels she is fulfilling the will of Him whom her pious husband so faithfully served, and is thus animated and consoled to persevere in this world's rugged highway, unto the end, and can now rejoice that her beloved partner's warfare is accomplished,—entered into that rest which 'remaineth for the people of God.' "

Both remained silent for some moments, when Mrs. Stanley, with Lizzy, carrying a well-filled basket, returned to the garden. Charles Stamer was much struck with the little girl's likeness to her mother, as they crossed over to where he stood, and he then remarked the former's broken figure, and the quiet, subdued expression of her once brilliant countenance, as it contrasted with the lively bounding and eager look of happiness of her child, who never yet had tasted sorrow.

"That woman's heart is broken," thought he, "yet there is nothing of moroseness or gloom about her, no more than about her little girl." He turned to a gay bed of scarlet lobelias.

"Your flowers are in great perfection," remarked he to Mrs. Stanley, as she came up.

"They are very fine, this autumn," returned the lady, "we have not had much rain to dim their beauty."

"But you seem to cultivate them with such peculiar success," observed young Stamer, as his eye glanced over the elegantly-arranged garden; "you have the different sorts classified, I see, and, I suppose, planted in soil best suited to the different species."

"Just so," replied Mrs. Stanley, smiling sadly, "I am a very fanciful gardener, and sometimes compare my flower-beds here with that Garden of the Lord, his faithful people blooming their allotted day, where his hand plants them, protected from the storm and sleet of sorrow, as well as from the scorching, withering blast of worldly pleasure, looking healthiest and brightest when grouped in the same *parterre*, like some Christian union, where each believer is strengthened and refreshed."

Her face was turned from him: his thoughts were

busy with his own parent's disunion—his mother's systematic deceit—and was silent.

"Mamma's flowers all die together," cried Lizzy. "Isn't that the reason you plant them, mamma, all of one kind in the same plot, that none should decay before the rest?" and the little girl looked up into her mother's face.

"Yes, Lizzy," returned Mrs. Stanley, slowly; "that is a fancy of mine: but the Lord's garden is different. His flowers wither singly, and are mowed down separately."

"They are only transplanted, Jane," said her father, gently laying his hand on his daughter's shoulder: "transplanted to that garden where decay never enters, where each flower is an unfading gem in that day when the Lord makes up his jewels."

"It is well, father," answered his afflicted child, almost inaudibly.

Young Stamer stooped to pull a flower beside him; he felt his own presence had recalled sorrowful recollections to the bereaved wife, for when a boy he had been a great favourite of her noble, open-hearted husband's, and with characteristic good-nature, he now started for a walk, with Bob and Lizzy, who were eager to set off, while Mr. Warner slowly followed.

"I am to be a soldier, Mr. Stamer, like papa," cried the little boy.

"I hope you will be as good, and as fine a fellow as he was," returned his companion.

"He left me his sword," observed the child, proudly.

"And his Bible, too, Robert," observed his sister, meekly.

"That is a sword, too," replied Robert; "for it is the Sword of the Spirit, it 'divides asunder the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.'"

And the manly boy repeated, in a slow, firm tone of voice, the Apostle's definition of the Word of God.

"You are very like your papa," exclaimed young Sta-

mer, as he looked on the embryo soldier, walking with measured pace beside him.

"I must fight as he did," returned the child, with the same bright, open blue eye as his gallant father, "for I shall serve, as he did, my God and my Queen."

The young man regarded the spirited boy with a look of admiration.

"Right, Bob!" he cried, "no hero could do more."

And for the next five minutes Charles Stamer thought of this young soldier's spiritual weapon, how powerful it was, even in the hands of a child.

"He is better armed than I am for the battle of life," was the suggestion of his own heart, as he mused over the lip service he himself had so often performed, and his late bodily penance in the *Quarant'Ore*.

As Mr. Warner overtook the party, he commenced an animated and agreeable conversation with his young friend, respecting his future proposed career in life.

"You must be up and doing," said the venerable old gentleman, kindly; "to whom much is given, much will be required; and though I join with you in hoping that your excellent uncle and father may be spared for many, many years, still, my good friend, you are their direct representative; by your example and precept, how many on their large estates will be led into truth or error, perish, or live everlastingly. You have a noble allowance," continued he, "but let not affluence make you an idler. 'In the sweat of his brow shall man earn his bread,' was the penalty inflicted for our first parents' transgression, and thus it is some must toil and dig, to clear away the mental thorn and bramble, as well as the daily tiller of the soil to prepare the stubborn earth for the husbandman's seed; and, young man," he added, fixing his thoughtful, intelligent eyes on his companion's face, "you are one of those placed in high places by the Giver of all Good, to promote and attend to this mental culture, as well as relieve the misery and physical wants of your fellow creatures; but you must work—work yourself; put your own shoulder to the wheel—your own hand to

the plough ; acquire useful and progressive knowledge, to enable you, skilfully and judiciously, to ameliorate the condition of your own tenantry, and that of your poorer neighbours, while you hold up to all a high standard to walk by, the standard of God's written word ; let it be the lamp to guide your own feet, and then can you more effectually turn the bright blaze of Gospel light on the darkened path of others ; and be assured, on the testimony of an old man, who has worked in the Lord's vineyard, the reward of such toil is sweet. There is a joy which no stranger intermedleth with, and every follower, however humble, of the meek and lowly Jesus, who did the work of Him that sent him, has this joy springing up within his own heart ; choose, then, my young friend, in the morning of life, God's service ; be not the slave of Satan, and of your own vile nature, but toil diligently and faithfully, during the heat and brunt of the day, for what you were created for, the promotion of the knowledge and glory of Him, 'who forgiveth all thine iniquities.'"

Charles Stamer listened gravely and attentively to his venerable friend ; he felt deeply impressed with the importance of a subject that had often before occupied his own thoughts, the responsibility of a large proprietor, rich in this world's goods ; but it never before had been brought so home to his own heart, and he felt how inadequate he was to guide others, with his own mind a darkened chaos of unquestioned belief, in the teaching of men, whose lives, he was sufficiently enlightened to perceive, were a succession of skilful frauds on the ignorance and credulity of their fellow creatures.

"Those who walk by Mr. Warner's lamp," he mentally said, "the light of God's word, seem neither mystified, nor depending on others to save or guide them, not groping their way in the dark, but have, in the Scriptures, an unerring standard to apply to ; but the Church says they are not the only rule of faith ;" and the young man's mind took a gallop over the rule of faith laid down by a Church he was taught to look on as in-

fallible. "There is the Latin Vulgate," mused he, "of the original Scriptures in the authorised Douay translation; then, the Apocrypha—Traditions—Pope's Bulls, eight folio volumes—Decretals, ten ditto—Acts of Councils, thirty-one ditto—Acts Sanctorum, or, the Sayings and Doings of the Saints, fifty-one ditto—with thirty-five volumes of the Greek and Latin Fathers—the Creed of Pius IV.,—and all the unwritten Traditions which floated down since the days of the Apostles; and the varied and contradictory exposition of same by Popes, Cardinals, and Priests."

"There is more danger of going astray," whispered common sense, "among all this heterogeneous matter, as a rule of faith, than taking, as our sole guide, what was written by infinite wisdom to direct the mind and conscience of finite beings, whom He himself created, and whose understanding, and wants, the great Creator must know infinitely better than their fellow sinners."

"I'll read the Bible, and judge for myself," thought Charley Stamer; "it made Mr. Warner the good man he is; it taught his daughter resignation, and a life of usefulness under the heaviest sorrow; and his little grandson has already girded on this 'sword of the spirit,' and is not afraid to handle a weapon, I have been told, would destroy me if touched, without the sheath or safeguard of the Church's interpretation." And then his mind dwelt on the conversation of the morning with old Mat Carey. "Unlettered as he is," pursued the young man's thoughts, "how just and right are the views of this unlearned man, how conscientiously and faithfully does he perform the humble duties of his station in life, and what is the rule of faith he judges and walks by—the Bible! I'll read the Bible, and judge for myself," was again the firm resolve of young Stamer, as the party drew up before a poor but neat cottage, with some flowering creepers clustering around its rustic porch.

An old man, apparently in the last stage of dropsy, was seated beneath its shadow, on the stone bench that occupied one of its sides; he seemed to breathe with

difficulty, but his eye followed a little girl, as she busily swept, broom in hand, the pathway from the high road to the house.

"Not at school to day, Nancy!" exclaimed Mr. Warner, as he passed through the little rustic gate in front.

"No, your Reverence," replied little Nancy, as she dropped her curtsy. "Father is reaping, your Honor, and mother's out binding, and Tom and Billy are stacking for Mr. Pierce, the farmer up yonder, your Reverence," said the child, as she stopped her work, and stood aside, executing a succession of curtsies, as Mr. Warner and his grandchildren entered.

"And the three younger ones are at school, I suppose?" returned her minister, kindly.

"Yes, your Reverence," replied Nancy; "I staid at home, Sir, to look after the old man"—and the child glanced towards the porch—"and Pat's to stay at home to-morrow, your Reverence, from school, and let me go in his place, Sir."

"Quite right, Nancy," said Mr. Warner, as he nodded approvingly to the child.

"How do you find yourself?" asked he of the sick man, who attempted to rise as his minister approached; "but don't stand up," he added; "I hope the Lord has dealt mercifully with you, and that you do not suffer as much as before you were tapped."

"It gave me great relief, your Reverence," replied the old man, in a broken voice. "The Lord has been very good to me, His hand, and His staff, support me in the last stage of the weary journey, your Reverence."

Young Stamer stood on the road, and leaned over the little gate in front, and thought what a picture the group before him would have made—the dying man, with his lack-lustre eyes fixed on the venerable Pastor, who leaned forward to address him, the little peasant child, with her suspended broom held listlessly in her hand, as eyes and ears were fully occupied in mute attention to her grandfather's visitors, while Lizzy Stanley carefully and methodically unpacked her basket in the porch, on

the stone bench opposite to where Billy Murray sat, and her brother, selecting a large bunch of ripe grapes from among her store, held it up suddenly before the sick man.

"I think these will refresh you, Billy," cried the boy, as he plucked off some of the ripest looking of the fruit, and handed them to the old man.

"Oh! Robert, you are in a great hurry," exclaimed Lizzy, who had not yet finished the unpacking of her basket, and did not like to be interfered with. "The grapes, mamma says, are only to be used when Billy's mouth is parched; I have here what is better for him, some wine and strong jelly."

"God of Heaven bless ye both," cried the dying peasant fervently, "and bless ye'er good mamma, who never let me know what it is to want for anything."

"You are going fast to that good land, Billy," said his Pastor, "where you shall hunger no more, neither thirst, but shall live in the Saviour's presence, in whom is fullness of joy for evermore."

"I shall see Him as He is," returned the sick man, "face to face. And I often think, ye'er Reverence, when I hear the Bible read for me, what a fine exchange I'll make, without sin, or sickness, saved by the blood of the Lamb, praising Him before His throne day and night, and my blessed Saviour not ashamed of old Billy Murray, because the Lord of Glory hath redeemed me of my sins."

"Aye!" replied his pious minister, "old Billy Murray sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that innumerable company of Saints whose sins have been blotted out, saved alike by a living faith in that one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus."

"Glory and honor be to His holy name!" cried the old man humbly, "who makes no difference between rich and poor, the learned or the simple, but says to all, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' And, oh! ye'er Reverence," he added earnestly, "Nothing but God's own word could show how such an ignorant, sinful creature as I am could be saved, washed

clean from all my sins, and clothed fit for such company, not with the filthy rags of my own works, but in the robe of my blessed Saviour's, His good work, when He died for such as me on Calvary."

"Let us pray," said the aged minister, as he knelt inside the open door-way of the cottage, while his grandchildren placed themselves on their knees beside him.

The sick man clasped his hands fervently together, and little Nancy crept to the side of the bench whereon he sat, and softly knelt down.

The young man, who still leaned on the gate, within a few yards of this little band of worshippers, prayed—fervently, earnestly prayed—"that the poor dying peasant's Saviour might be his Saviour too, that the way of salvation might be shown to his own mind, clearly, plainly, as to the poor ignorant cottier, about to meet his God without one misgiving of a Saviour's power and will to save."

Charles Stamer's prayer was heard, and he felt within himself it was.

Mr. Warner and he pursued their walk to the school-house that was within view, and Lizzy, at her own request, was allowed to remain with old Billy Murray, to perform her mother's usual task of reading to him a portion of Scripture. The child drew her Bible out of the basket, and seating herself opposite the sick man, asked, "What chapter he would like?"

The dying man fixed his eyes on the face of the ministering child, with a look of grateful thankfulness, as he said—"Miss Lizzy, my time is but short; give me the chapter, if you please, Miss, about the last night the Lord Jesus was on earth: He was about going the same journey that I am, and I want Him to be with me on that dark road to bring me to where He is—in glory! glory!" he repeated, as if realizing the end of his journey; while the child turned to the 17th of St. John's Gospel, and in a clear, distinct, yet childish voice, commenced reading that beautiful and affecting chapter.

Charles Stamer lingered to look back at that lowly

porch, and his inward resolve was confirmed. "I'll read the Bible, and judge for myself."

"I do not apologise to you, my dear young friend," said Mr. Warner, as they resumed their walk, "for bringing you among my sick poor, or to visit my schools. I enjoy a friend's society far more when it does not interfere with my daily duty, and I am an old man, and cannot afford to let one day's work overtake another."

Charles Stamer assured him that he should greatly enjoy seeing how his schools worked. "I have always thought," he added, "that a sound enlightened education was one of the greatest blessings we could bestow on the poor, a sort of stock-in-trade no circumstances can deprive them the advantage of in after years."

"You are quite right," returned the old clergyman; "but the basis of that sound education must be the Scripture, which, as St. Paul says in his directions to Timothy for the management of those under his care, 'is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.'"

Charles Stamer thought of that rule of faith, the Council of Trent, that declares, "if the Bible were to be translated into the vulgar tongue, and read indiscriminately, the temerity of man would cause more evil than good to arise from it," and reasoned within himself, "St. Paul is a better judge of the matter than the Council of Trent," and remained silent until they reached the school-house.

It was a plain commodious building, without any attempt at ornament, except the pretty and trim kept garden in front, through which they now passed; and Mr. Warner entering without knocking, young Stamer found himself surrounded by a number of boys of the poorer class, with shining faces, and smoothed-down locks, as they rose to salute their welcome pastor.

Some of the boys were meanly and poorly clad, but all wore the mark of thrifty, cared-for children; while their

well mended garments bore witness to the industrious habits of a mother or sister, and their cheerful intelligent faces looked the brighter at seeing their beloved minister, as they now formed in circle round him; the girls from the adjoining school soon appearing, with their mistress, to take part in the Scriptural lesson, the faithful rector of Wellmine usually heard himself at this hour.

CHAPTER XX.

Man ! man ! tho' in the dust his insect birth,
 Behold his nature unto God allied,
 Link'd to the golden throne, this creature earth,
 By ties that shall eternally abide ;
 Let suns—let systems perish—Jesus died.

CONDER.

THE chapter read by the class was the 5th of Romans, and Mr. Warner, after it was concluded, selected the first verse—"Being justified by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," asking them, "could good works merit salvation?"

The children answered readily from Scripture, turning to the different passages, and reading them from the Bible each held, and Charles Stamer, seated on a form at some distance, heard this fundamental doctrine of the Church he was secretly brought up a member of, demolished by "the Sword of the Spirit,"—the Word of God in the hands of children of the poorest class, unlearned in the sophistry of man's wisdom, but powerful to "the bringing down the strongholds (of error) with the weapon they so skilfully wielded."

"In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be *justified*—Isaiah, xiv. chap., 25 verse," replied one of the elder boys, turning over the leaves of his Bible to the passage he had just quoted.

"What description does the Prophet give of the Lord, who justifies His Israel, or believing people?" asked the minister.

A bright eyed intelligent little girl answered—

"The Lord that was wounded for our transgressions,

bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed—Isaiah, liii. chap., 5 verse."

"Very well answered, indeed, Letty," exclaimed the old clergyman, kindly. "But now, we come back to the original question—Can good works merit salvation?"

Young Stamer found himself listening with intense interest for the reply, and never thought of repeating the *Ave Maria*, as of old, when the Bible was either read or quoted before him.

"Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be *justified*—Psalm cxliii., 2 verse," read a sturdy-looking boy about the centre of the class, from his open Bible.

"By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be *justified* in His sight," repeated a little fellow, while one of the head class boys supplied the reference, "Romans, iii. chap., 20 verse."

"Johnny," said Mr. Warner, "find out the chapter and verse for yourself, you'll so remember it against the next time."

The little man turned to his Bible and found the passage.

"Do ye remember any other texts, children?" asked their pastor, that go to shew "good works cannot merit salvation?"

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us—Gal., iii. chap., 13 verse," cried out two boys at the same time.

"Joe Proctor," said Mr. Warner, smiling at the boy who was second in the quotation, "repeat a verse for yourself, and let it be as well applied as your neighbour's."

Joe paused a moment, while a smile went round the class; and the aristocratic-looking young man seated on the form, found himself watching Joe's confused countenance, as the little boy, evidently, ransacked his memory for a text.

Charles Stamer ran over, in his own mind, more than one verse of Scripture he had heard in the forenoon,

that, if conveyed to Joe, would help him out of the dilemma, his companions now began to titter at.

Robert Stanley, who stood beside the form his friend was seated on, with quick intelligence read his thoughts, stepping forward, noiselessly, behind Joe's back, in a whisper prompted him. Joe, in a sheepish voice, repeated, "Jesus was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our *justification*."

"The chapter and verse, my man," asked Mr. Warner, gravely.

Poor Joe looked utterly confounded, for his prompter had retired to his place beside young Stamer.

"Let whoever supplied you with the verse, Joe, now give you the reference, that you may hunt it up for yourself," observed his pastor.

"I do not remember it, Grandpapa," said Robert Stanley, stepping a few paces forward, while he made the manly avowal of his ignorance, with a cheek glowing with confusion at being discovered.

The old gentleman nodded to one of the elder boys to give the reference. After a moment it was supplied by more than one—"Romans, iv. chap., 25 verse."

"Now, Robert," cried his Grandfather, "remember where to find your text in future, and give me one, with a reference, that you recollect."

The little boy paused for an instant, and then, in his manly, clear voice, he repeated aloud—"For it is our God that shall *justify* the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith—Romans, iii. chap., 30 verse."

With a boy's emulation, one of the poorest-looking little fellows in the class cried out—"A man is *justified* by faith, without the deeds of the law—Romans, iii. chap., 28 verse;" while one of the elder girls repeated, timidly—"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ—Cor., iii. chap., 11 verse."

"If we cannot justify ourselves, then, as you have clearly proved from Scripture," said the aged minister, "can we make atonement for the sin of another?"

Young Stamer started; whatever was wanting in his own good works, he had been taught to fill up with the works of others, and had been accustomed to draw largely on the Saints, for some of their never-failing supply of works of supererogation, or his mother's store of penances, fasts, and prayers, reserved to supply the shortcomings of her children, above the sum total required to secure her own salvation; and one of those children now, for the first time, felt the ground he had hitherto built his eternal hopes on, give way, and crumble beneath his feet; and this high born young man, with intellect of no mean order, educated liberally and expensively, awaited the reply of a poor, half clad, little boy, taught only the simplest rudiments of scholarship, but grounded thoroughly in God's Revealed Word, with an intensity of interest that amazed himself.

"No man may deliver his brother, nor make atonement unto God for him, for it cost more to redeem their souls, so that he must let that alone for ever—Psalm xlix., verse 9," read the child out of his Bible.

"When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, 'we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do'—Luke, xvii. chap., 10 verse," repeated a nice little girl.

While a very small child beside her, cried out—

"There's no just man upon earth."

And here she stopt short, and coloured up to her eyes; a grown girl beside her good naturedly finished the quotation—

"That doeth good, and sinneth not—Eccles., vii. chap., 20 verse."

"Very good answering," said their minister, kindly, much pleased.

"There is none that doeth good, no, not one," cried out another child; while Mr. Warner supplied the reference, "Psalm, xiv., 3 verse." And an elder boy repeated steadily—

"Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God—Romans, xiv. chap., 12 verse." "Whosoever

shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all—James, xi. chap., 10 verse.”

A short impressive prayer, for the teaching and guidance of God's Holy Spirit, was offered up by this faithful shepherd for the souls entrusted to his care, and to increase his own faithfulness in promoting the honour and glory of his great Lord and Master; and again Charles Stamer prayed—prayed this time as a sinful guilty being, before an all-seeing and Holy God; and in the depths of his soul glorified that Redeemer, who had taught him, by such humble instruments, that day, to find in a crucified Saviour a full sufficient ransom for his sins.

He was silent and thoughtful as they walked towards the sick man's cottage, where they had left Lizzy Stanley; the child had finished reading, and was looking on in apparently much enjoyment, as old Billy Murray eat of a piece of nice cold roast beef; while she held in her hand a small plate of jelly, as Billy's second course.

The sick man talked to “Miss Lizzy,” and blessed her many times and oft, as he eat of this luxurious repast; and as the thoughtful looking child gravely handed to the poor weakly old man the small plate of jelly she had taken from her store of good things, she said, loud enough for little Nancy to hear—

“Mamma says, Billy, the jelly is the best thing for you to take, so take the rest of what I have brought you from time to time; but mind, Billy, and eat all the jelly yourself.”

“Nancy, Miss Lizzy, is a good crathur, and larned at school never to touch what was not for her; but you brought me so much, Miss Lizzy, I'll never miss giving her a taste.”

Lizzy seemed to think the division would be best made by herself, and taking a small bit of jelly from old Billy's reserved store, offered it to the little girl; the child looked hurt, and thanking Miss Lizzy, declined taking for herself what would do her granddada good.

“Lizzy coloured; and her own grandpapa, who saw and heard all, came up to where she stood, saying—

“My child, never forget the lesson this poor little girl

has just taught you, that the poor can be as upright and as self-denying as others."

The tears stood in his granddaughter's gentle eyes.

"Come, Nancy," said this Christian gentleman, "Miss Lizzy did not mean to hurt your feelings, she was only anxious to keep all the jelly for the poor sick man; and now, Lizzy, I think we had better go home, and the next time you can bring something for little Nancy."

Lizzy's countenance brightened up, and as she took her empty basket, she said gently—

"Oh! yes, grandpapa, I'll bring her the next bit of cake I get, and an orange, and one of my dolls; but," she added, as if recollecting herself, "I promised to read to old Billy before I go, the passage he made me read twice for him;" and the child opened her Bible where her marker was placed, at the 17th of John; while the sick man lifted up his hands and eyes, as he called upon the Lord to pour a blessing upon her; then repeating, as if he wished to get by heart, in a broken feeble voice, after the clear youthful tone of Lizzy, as she read—

"Father, I will, that they also, whom Thou has given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me, for Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world."

"There is no glory in purgatory," cried Mr. Warner, turning with a faint smile towards the sick man: "and the Saviour you trust in, Billy, is not there; and His believing people have the promise to 'be with Him, where He is.'"

"At the right hand of God for ever more," cried the old cottier, as he turned his dying gaze upwards.

"Where he ever liveth to make intercession," returned his faithful minister; "for you, and for me, and for every other sinner who call on Him in time of need," he added solemnly.

"Glory be to His holy name," was the ejaculation of old Billy Murray, as he thought of his warfare accomplished.

Young Stamer's heart responded "Glory be to His holy name," as he thought of his warfare begun.

CHAPTER XXI.

But all things are marshalled by Design, and carefully tended by Benevolence.

TUPPER.

“I quite agree with you, my young friend,” replied Mr. Warner, to a remark of Charles Stamer’s, as he and Frank Lee lingered over the dessert after their early dinner, “in thinking that circumstances over which we have little or no control, in a great measure colour our future lives; but those circumstances, no matter how trivial, or how important, are, we should never forget, modified, as well as permitted, by the Omniscient and Omnipotent, who ordereth all things wisely; our plain duty being, so to act in every position we may possibly be placed in, by the unerring rule of God’s revealed word, as immutable for the guidance of sinful man, as the fixed laws of nature for the brute creation; and,” added the aged minister, “I have found, by observation, as well as my own experience, that the most untoward circumstances, if submitted to, and directed by, the Scriptures of Truth, invariably ‘work together for good.’ I should have never, perhaps, been a labourer in the Lord’s vineyard,” continued he, “had not an early and overwhelming sorrow, the loss of my beloved wife, that was dearer to me than the apple of mine eye, drove me forth a wanderer in many lands, and led me ultimately from my love of classical literature, to take up my abode in the city of the Cæsars. Surrounded by objects of art, and the interest created by residing ’midst the ruins of bygone centuries, I hoped would relieve a mind broken down, as mine was at the time, under the crushing weight

of a sorrow that was not only, I may say, the first I endured, but the severest affliction of my whole life. The Director of all things led me by a way I knew not of; and though my spirit rebelled against the hand that smote me, still that hand was stretched out to save, by guiding my steps to that mystical Babylon, and awakening me, by witnessing daily and hourly the besotted bigotry and slavery of modern Rome, to compare Papal with Pagan institutions, and painfully obliged to acknowledge that heathenism, with all its gross impurities, had exercised a far more ennobling and beneficial influence over the ancient Romans, dictating laws, and extending, with her conquests, civilization to the then known world, than the priestly sway over the degraded modern Italian, sunk in effeminacy and vain shows, without even the shadow of liberty in either action or thought, the slave of superstitious observances, more absurd and more debasing to the human intellect, than the worship of Ceres and Proserpine, with all power, temporal and ecclesiastic, vested in a dominant and despotic priesthood, who trafficked with the souls and liberties of men, to aggrandise that great masterpiece of Satan, 'the Man of Sin;' who, sitting in the temple of God, setteth himself up as a rival Christ, to draw all men from the knowledge of the truth; while the pomp and tinsel of ceremonial worship, throws a false and fictitious glare over a faith as idolatrous, and as far removed from the simplicity of Apostolic worship, as the religion promulgated in the temple of Vesta. The idol had only received a new name; it was still the idol, cunningly devised out of wood and stone, receiving prayer and praise from hearts and lips created to serve and glorify that invisible God, whose every attribute demands an undivided worship. Like the sceptic Gibbon, who, amidst the ruins of the Capitol, planned his 'Decline and Fall,' and as he sat witnessing the festival of the *Benedizione del Bambino*, in the church built on the site of the magnificent temple of the Capitoline Jove, is said to have contrasted the fanatical ignorant monks, who carried in procession the little wooden image of the

miraculous *Bambino*, tricked out in gold and gems, surrounded with its military guards, presenting arms, 'midst a flourish of music, and showers of incense, receiving priestly benediction, and presented for veneration and worship to the vast crowds who bowed the knee before the bedizened piece of wood—contrasting, as I say, these Franciscan monks, who got up this ridiculous imposture, to increase the revenues of their Church, with the religion of a Pliny and Cicero, the great historian doubted all revealed truth; and I, too, like Gibbon, stood an Infidel, beneath the dome of St. Peter's, as I witnessed the weak, imbecile, tyrannic old man, who arrogated to himself the title of 'Christ's vicar,' borne along on men's shoulders, seated on his gorgeous throne, stiff in golden tissue, glittering in jewels, surrounded by his gilded fan-bearers, while thousands prostrated themselves before this living idol, who had robbed them of their liberties as freemen, ground them by priestly oppression into a nation of paupers, and defrauded them, by a system of base and tyrannical *espionage*, of even the liberty of thought. 'Surely,' I said within my own heart, 'the modern Roman is more the dupe of his imaginative powers than in the days of the Cæsars. Freemen worshipped the heathen gods, but slaves bow down in this magnificent Christian temple, before the puerile puppet of priestly power, that has robbed them not only of their liberties, but of the common rights of man, the use of the reasoning faculty. From henceforth,' I thought, as the cannon of St. Angelo thundered, 'midst the crash of military music, and the pealing forth of joyous bells, while the exhausted Pope-idol was borne aloft to the balcony above, and stretched forth his withered hands to bless a people he had enslaved and degraded, while thousands of his victims knelt before him in ecstatic worship—'From henceforth,' was my inmost cry, 'I abjure all religion. Materialism is my creed.'

Mr. Warner paused: he had rivetted the attention of both his auditors. Frank Lee's look of listless indifference, which his features had worn during his visit, with

that air of languor and absence of mind which betrays overwrought and preoccupied feelings, had vanished. Italy was to him a land of mystery and ideal beauty he had pined to see, and Mr. Warner's glowing description of this worship of the senses, 'midst the classical and magnificent ruins of heathen rites, equally gorgeous and imposing, flushed his fevered cheek with excitement; while Charles Stamer, with a look of grave and deep thought on his manly brow, said earnestly, "But you read the Scriptures, I suppose, Sir, and did not confound pompous ceremonial with the Christian religion."

"Just so," returned Mr. Warner, "I had never before thought much on the subject of religion, but I had never doubted its truths, until I despised its superstitions and absurd ceremonies, in a Church calling herself infallible, in the seat of ancient freedom, enslaved, and stricken by Priestcraft rule."

After a pause Mr. Warner resumed—

"Disgusted with the assumption of almost God-like power in a weak, erring old man, the successor in the fabulous chair of St. Peter, of some of the most worldly, depraved, and vicious men, that have ever disgraced the page of history—a despotic pontiff, surrounded by a splendour and magnificence, with troops of attendant priests, attired as kings, engaged in rites, no matter how gorgeous and imposing, still borrowed from heathen and barbaric temples, while they professed to be the servants of Him, who had not where to lay His head, and whose chosen followers were poor and lowly fishermen—disgusted, as I say, with the glitter and glare of pontifical magnificence, this 'decorated phantom'—a vast and splendid sarcophagus, enamelled with a mosaic of gold and jewels, containing in its core but rottenness and decay, the worthless and burnt-out ashes of an impure mythology—I turned my steps towards the Campagna, to breathe the free air of Heaven, after the oppressive weight of human grandeur I had just witnessed; and passing out of the city, through the *Porta del Popolo*, in that neglected thoroughfare, met an old college friend,

whom I had not seen since my wedding-day. He had then acted as my bridesman, and meeting him now, sorrowing for her who, on that day, I had so joyously looked forward to spending a long life with, I felt perfectly unmanned, and almost unresistingly accompanied my old chum, who seemed delighted to meet me in a foreign land, to the English Church in the *Abattoir*, or swine market, outside the city gates, and found myself in a congregation of some hundred worshippers, engaged in *spiritual* not *ceremonial* service, to that God who must be approached in spirit and in truth. What a contrast to the gorgeous spectacle I had just witnessed, where 'the lust of the eye,' and 'the pride of life,' were satiated to their fill! Was this grave, serious congregation, with quiet decorum of demeanor characterising the listeners, and fervent and unaffected piety the preacher of that everlasting gospel, addressed to the reasoning faculties, as well as to the hearts of sinful men? Surely, I thought, such worship as this, devoid of all artistical effect, if all creeds are not a delusion, must be most in conformity with the primitive church of Christ, where the *simple*, and not the *splendid* was observed in the worship of his lowly followers.

"The upper room,' where apostles and disciples met together to offer up prayer and praise, read and expound the Scriptures, was totally irreconcilable with the earthly pomp and worldly grandeur of the magnificent service, I had that day seen performed beneath the glorious dome of St. Peter's; and as I gazed around me on the unpretending chamber, where all that was Protestant in Rome were assembled in thanksgiving and prayer, according to the simple ritual of the Reformed Church, surrounded by no material splendour to distract their attention from the worship of that God, 'who is a Spirit,' the walls unadorned with mosaic and costly gems, devoid of statue or picture—the worshippers seeking at the throne of grace those virtues that perfect the character, and purify the heart, not lulled, by profound observance, into a forgetfulness of the great

truths of Christianity—retaining and observing that soul worship which is the presiding genius of the gospel.

“I spent the remainder of the day in company with my friend. He had apartments in the Palazza Rubestianini, was a man of large, independent views, refined, classical tastes, and much black-letter learning, well suited to arouse my mind from the morbid sorrow which had broken down my energies, and I hailed his presence at Rome as the first sunbeam that gilded the dark cloud that lowered over my path for the previous two years; he was indeed a ray of light, sent from the great fountain of brightness, to illumine, by Gospel truth, the misty chaos of my darkened soul; for though I had been educated in the Christian faith, though the Bible was as familiar to me as ‘household words,’ and though the beloved partner I mourned had departed in a full assurance of faith in that Redeemer she so truly loved and served, still my heart was full of hard thoughts of God, unacquainted with its own sinfulness, and indifferent to the great sacrifice of Calvary; no wonder, then, I doubted the truths of revelation, standing in that city that produced a ‘commonwealth of kings,’ surrounded by the mighty past, the wreck of Pagan creeds transformed into gorgeous temples of Christian worship, outvying with obsolete Heathenism—in the magnificence and absurdity of religious ceremonies—a Church, as false in its assumption of infallibility, and pretended miracles, as Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*, while it trampled down and annihilated the freedom of a people the religion of Cato had spared; but the invisible hand led me by a way I dreamed not of, and my expressed infidelity called forth a vigorous refutation of my unbelief in the veracity of all creeds from my friend, based on the internal evidence contained in the Holy Scriptures.

I read them carefully at first, to discover some discrepancy, or contradiction, that would support my own views. I read them prayerfully afterwards, for they had uplifted the veil that concealed the corruption of an un-renewed heart, and found in them a balm, and solace, I

had hitherto been a stranger to, while by their light I could see my way, for the Apostle well knew the wants and infirmity of our nature, when he wrote to Timothy, 'the Scriptures were able to make him wise unto salvation.' "

Mr. Warner was silent. His young friends were differently affected.

"I shall, with God's blessing, read the Scriptures, and judge for myself," thought Charles Stamer.

"How I should wish to visit thee, Rome!" apostrophised Frank Lee, as he divided a beautiful but over-ripe peach on his plate.

"Like the fruit you have chosen," observed Mr. Warner, with a smile, "you would find it very beautiful, very attractive, but very unsound; there is no healthy freedom at Rome, the people wear a gloomy and careless aspect, at least, in my day, it was then the city of the dead, for the faint spark of liberty that since ignited into an abortive attempt to free their country from the nightmare of priestly rule, appeared extinguished for ever."

"It only smouldered," observed young Stamer, "and the time is not far distant," he added, with some vehemence of manner, "when for smoke there will be flame. The writings of such as Manzoni and d'Azeglio, have prepared Italy to choose laymen for her tutors, and leave priests to tyrannize only in the Confessional;" and he thought with some bitterness of his own experience, and late monotonous penance of the *Quarant' Ore*.

"Aye," returned Mr. Warner, as he sipped moderately his glass of wine, "the flame will burn fierce and bright, for when a people come to reason about free institutions, as the modern Italians have done, they will soon expel 'the old women in red,' and establish some form of government, where the rights of a trodden down people are not sacrificed to the Moloch of Superstition. It is only now a question of time when Italy will shake off the galling yoke of the Papacy. The Torch of Liberty will be lighted throughout the Peninsula, though it perhaps may be by a frantic hand, and, by its glare, that

Rome, where Paul once preached, will read that Freeman's Epistle to the Romans, and the rest of those Scriptures of Truth, that alone make free indeed."

"Bond or free," remarked Frank Lee, "the Italian breathes an atmosphere of beauty that may well reconcile him to almost any form of government."

"Ideality, is a syren," observed Mr. Warner, "sure to lead captive those delicate organisations who prefer dreams to reality, the sketches of their own vivid fancy to the light of reason and revelation. The modern Roman feels too acutely the evils of an administrative system, that debars him of even the power of thought, and condemns to hopeless captivity, without even the mockery of a trial, all under the Papal sway, who may venture to express a political or religious opinion, not sanctioned by the Jesuit censor, who controls the consciences of men, as well as the Public Press; he feels all this too keenly to care much for the magnificent monuments of other and prouder days that his city abounds in; they seem only to point the finger of scorn at the enslaved descendants of the Tribunes; and hence it is, that indifference and apathy are manifested towards works of art, by the native Italian, that amazes the visitor with æsthetic predilections at Rome, intoxicated with sights of earthly grandeur, and earthly decay, such as he never before witnessed. But the effect on the bond and free are far different. The visitor feels nothing but the most enthusiastic pleasure, for the iron rule of superstition is not preying on his vitals; sights and sounds of beauty await him, and, if reason surrenders the reigns to fancy, he is sure to be meshed in the wily net of an ubiquitous Propaganda, spread every where around him to engulf the unwary. I should dread," added Mr. Warner, as he looked on the ideal brow of Frank Lee, "a young, enthusiastic, imaginative nature, unrenewed by divine grace, visiting Rome; there is so much to draw away the mind from the daily duties of ordinary life—Sculpture—Paintings—Music—magnificent Churches—costly Basilicas—Palazzas—Temples—Amphitheatres—Baths—

Catacombs—relics of the mighty past—and a Church seated on those seven hills, claiming to sit as queen over all other churches, arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, with whom ‘the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication, or spiritual idolatry.’ ”

“I thought far more,” cried young Stamer, “when I was at Rome, of where Cicero and Cato spoke, than I did of a Grand Festival at St. Peter’s, or a Horse Race in the Corso. A ruin past redemption is mighty Rome; still I felt, though her liberties had perished beneath Imperial sway, they had died out amidst a blaze of glory that still illuminated the posterity of the ‘mighty men of Rome’ in our own day, working their way to freedom, though the fetter’s clasp remains unbroken.”

“To you, then,” returned Mr. Warner, “this mystic Babylou was a homily. To my young friend here I would say, touch not the unclean thing.”

Both young men laughed.

“I shall tell you something of my own experience,” resumed Mr. Warner, “of those quicksands that lie concealed midst flowers of rare and cultivated beauty, in the Protestant’s path at Rome; indeed, what I am going to relate, was overruled to me for good, and led me to enter the ministry of Christ, and raise my feeble testimony as an answering cry to that ‘voice from Heaven,’ heard by St. John, ‘Come out of her My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.’ ”

CHAPTER XXII.

In every clime, from Lapland to Japan,
This truth's confest—That man's worst foe is man.

KIRKE WHITE,

AFTER a moment's pause, the aged pastor resumed. "I mentioned to you, that the friend I had so opportunely met, resided in the Palazza Rubestianini. It was a large wilderness sort of palace, with a large courtyard, full of statuary, a grand staircase, decorated with busts of emperors, cardinals, and artists, while the different apartments of the Palazza contained nearly as many different inhabitants as they numbered. The medley truly was great; an extravagant Irish noble was domiciled in the *primo piano*, while his washerwoman dried her clothes in the garret. The intermediate *suites* were variously occupied, the Proprietor himself, a prince with ancient blood, and exhausted resources, modestly retaining for his own use, apartments nearer the *Blauchese* than those my friend occupied, which were lofty and magnificent in their proportions; walls and ceilings, covered with arabesques and frescoes, but looking into a filthy yard, after a shower splashed into a sea of mud, intersected here and there with little islets of rubbish, anything but attractive to look on. So it is in Rome with all things, the mind alternately delighted and disgusted; streets unpaved, unwashed, without pathways, or police, or light, to guide the unwary step which ventures within reach of the filthy shower, poured down from upper windows on the head of some unlucky pedestrian. My friend was a reading man, and when within doors, gave himself up unreservedly to his books, with nothing externally to distract

his attention. A Priest occupied apartments on the same floor, and an Oxford student, with whom the *padre* seemed to keep up an intimate and friendly intercourse. My friend, though a reading man, was not of an unsocial turn ; and the Priest, and young Collegian, from a civil courtesy on the staircase and landing, had insensibly become his visitors, the former supplying much valuable information, respecting localities, that had puzzled my friend, in the Guide-books, and objects of art, and *vertú*, about which he felt deeply interested ; the latter, fresh from *Alma Mater*, was racy of Sallust and Horace ; so that at the time I renewed an acquaintance with my old friend in the *Porta del Popolo*, those gentlemen could be found, some time or other each day, discussing, in his apartments, subjects of much interest to all parties. I enjoyed such society vastly, particularly the Priest's, he possessed so much varied information, though a boy, almost, in appearance, and seemed so willing to impart pleasure to others, from the rich stores of his own mind, with an open, winning fascination of manner, that left an antagonist a good deal at his mercy ; then, his views were so liberal and enlightened, that I sometimes felt angry with my friend, for not conceding more than he did, his own peculiar opinions on religious subjects ; while my own mind, unsettled and wavering, as to the great truths of Christianity, stood aloof from taking any personal part in these encounters, as to whether 'the dogmas of a Church, claiming to be infallible, were to supersede the use of the Scriptures,' or, 'the Scriptures, as the rule of faith, to test the true Church,' was argued ably and well on both sides. 'What was written for the guidance and enlightenment of the first Church, at Jerusalem and at Antioch, or body of Believers,' my reason argued, 'must, no doubt, continue the fundamental rule for the guidance of any future Churches, or bodies of Believers, to the end of time.' Ergo, 'the Scriptures should be read by Laymen, addressed, as they were, indiscriminately, to Priests and Laymen, by the inspired writers.' So far, my reasoning faculties decided against

the Priest, but I was still far from adopting my friend's views in the momentous doctrines of Christianity; and though I read the Scriptures carefully, and constantly, it was with the avowed purpose, in my own mind, of confuting both antagonists. The Oxford man usually played the part of listener; he was a clever, subtle disputant, but seldom entered the lists, and when he did, in adducing the arguments and customs of the early Fathers, in those centuries succeeding the Apostles, usually got into such a contradictory labyrinth, as to throw the weight of his reasoning into the scale of Father Ignatius."

Young Stamer started as if that name had been a stroke of electricity.

"I did not know him, then," resumed Mr. Warner, observing his friend's sudden start of amazement; "I thought him what he led me to suppose, an Englishman, belonging to an ancient Catholic family, who chose the Priesthood for him as a profession, rather than his own unbiassed choice; whereas, he was the *clève* of the College of Loyola, in the first ranks of the *élite* of that subtle and soul-destroying Propaganda, of which he is now the real, if not the ostensible head.

"His power over me was great, but the word of God was mightier, 'to the bringing down of strongholds,' and it had revealed me to myself, sinful, and self-condemned. I read its pages, and prayed for light like a blind man who recovers his sight; I saw, as it were, at first, men, like trees, walking, until the momentous importance of revelation, as applied to the spiritual saving of man's immortal soul from an eternity of woe, stood out, as if in bold relief, on my awakened mind, and seemed as if burnt in by a hand of flame on my convinced and renewed breast.

"I felt the strength of the armour I had put on; I longed to convince my Priest friend, that a draught of the fountain of Truth would purify his spirit from the superstitious errors, and Pagan travesties of a Church, boasting to be the sole guide of man. And here my real danger commenced, as far as the powers of this

world shall prevail, but I had Christ's written promise, and, in humble faith, rested on it—'No man shall pluck those, that the Father hath given me, out of my hand.'

"All that sophistry could adduce was skilfully brought forward by this concealed Jesuit, to convince me, the Church of which he was a ministering Priest, alone, had power to guide the faith of man, and by the powers confided to her, kept up a perpetual sacrifice to take away sins. At first he did not ignore the use of the Scriptures, but acknowledged that, under the Church's interpretation, they might be read to edification; but when pressed home, by convincing texts, refuting his arguments, a traditionary legend of some Saint, the Bull of some Pope, no matter how wicked, as a man, the same Pope might be, or a Decree of some Council, in the darker ages, was cited, as far more respectable and unquestionable authorities than the written word of God; while his friend, the young Student, raised up the dust of mediæval times, and the authority of the Fathers, to mystify me into believing that those Holy Scriptures which emanated from God himself were incomplete, and inadequate to instruct man, not only in matters of faith, but in those forms and ceremonies suitable, as he argued, to the 'development of the age.'

"'Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ,' was St. Paul's admonition to future believers, and in the simplicity of this great Apostle's worship, 'who prayed with the spirit and with the understanding,' I was determined to rest satisfied, and boldly demanded, 'what formula had Peter or Paul decreed as indispensable for public worship in a developed age?' 'Brethren,' wrote the Apostle Paul, on this subject, 'be not children in understanding, but in understanding be men;' and his directions to the Churches contained no chapter of ceremonies, no learned disquisition on the color, and pattern of copes and stoles, vestments and albs, altars and candlesticks, lecturns and faldstools, but briefly summed up in those comprehensive words, 'Let all things be done decently and in order;' while he positively and

distinctly forbids public prayer being offered up in an 'unknown tongue.'

"The Scriptural *chevaux de frise*, I ensconced myself behind, was not broken down by the sophisms of a Church 'who had departed from the faith;' and from the seventh century up to the present day, her General Councils decreed Innovations and Heresies, no doubt, suited to meet the development of succeeding ages, and the natural carnal heart of man. The page of History has traced them chronologically thus:—In 700, 'the Invocation of Saints' was decreed; 87 years afterwards, 'Image Worship;' while in 1215, 'Supremacy,' 'Auricular Confession,' 'Half Communion,' and 'Transubstantiation,' were first considered orthodox by the Church of Rome; and in 1438, 'Purgatory' was promulgated; the 'Seven Sacraments,' in 1547; while the 'Sacrifice of the Mass,' and the 'Worship of the Virgin Mary,' was not decreed until 1563; her immaculate conception, an undecided point of disputation in this infallible Church, in the 19th Century.

"The Oxford disputant was routed, he thought, to restore what the piety and wisdom of our forefathers had flung away as worse than useless, in their days, not 'Mediæval usages,' but, as I found from History, 'Modern Heresies,' unknown in the religion of the Apostles and primitive Christians. My early friend was delighted he had found in me an ally, after so successfully combating my scepticism by that word 'that searcheth the heart,' and our antagonists had struck, at least, so far as avoiding anything like disputation. The Priest was more than ever assiduous to please; the Oxfordian read his Virgil and Horace, amidst the ruins of the Capitol; time flew by. Just recovering the shock of a deep and lasting sorrow, my mind shrunk from anything like general society; my friend was studious and retired; the Oxford student was much to his taste. I was of a more active turn, and in company with the Priest, made many a pilgrimage through the wreck

of Ancient Rome. How much did I admire that man's varied and brilliant powers! Whether grave or gay, exercising a strange fascination over my mind, throwing a golden light on every subject he touched, rebuilding every ruin he visited, with a story of the mighty past, Papal Rome seemed banished from both of our minds. His object, no doubt, was to lull me into a false security, and he would have admirably succeeded, had the reading of the Scriptures been attended with no more profitable result than enabling me to confound, successfully, the leading dogmas of his Church. But I still suffered much mentally, and there was healing balm in the Word of God. 'Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' was the Saviour's invitation; and to the throne of His mercy seat I went, in humble faith, and sought daily in His revealed word, 'for help in time of need.' I had always a decided taste for painting and sculpture, and then, with my mind unstrung by sorrow, I was incapable, at times, of enjoying any society, and a picture, or statue, from some master's hand, seemed best suited to hold companionship with my morbid feelings.

"My friend, the Priest, fostered this fancy within me, by bringing me often, as if unpremeditatedly, opposite some of the most striking pictures at Rome, and then suddenly leaving me to the contemplation of a work of art, he well knew would engross my attention; and thus I became familiarised with Basilicas and Churches, some of whose altars were decorated with those rare gems of art, while I lingered in their aisles, at times, during those solemn and imposing ceremonies, which the Church of Rome substitutes for vital Christianity. My friend had been latterly much engaged in the study of Church History, with the young student. From this they had dipped into the Fathers, and a plan was suggested by the young Oxford gentleman, of assimilating the Anglican and Romish Churches, that took mightily with my old friend. There were no 'Tracts for the Times' written in those days, but this

incipient oratorian was earnest in the work, and sanguine of success, and my unsuspecting friend was, as I said before, much taken with the plausibility of a scheme that presented no material obstacle to a lasting union between the two Churches. 'Just conceding a little in the adoption of harmless ceremonies, and interpreting the writings of the Fathers, and some of the early reformers, in a Catholic spirit, who were carried away,' this young gentleman contended, 'much farther than they intended by their newly awakened zeal.' Such was the jargon, used to mystify truth and falsehood, the words of Scripture were forgotten, as applied to all who have apostatized from an apostolic faith. 'Let them alone, they went out from us, because they were not of us.' And my friend, after much patient investigation, came to the wise conclusion, that no concession should be made to a Church, whose gilding is deadly, and soul destroying error; and before any other attempt could be made to convince him to the contrary, some business of importance recalled him to England, and I took possession of his apartments in the Palazza Rubestianini, that he had taken for a longer period. Shortly afterwards, as I was one morning lingering in the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, gazing on that statue, by Michael Angelo, on the left of the high altar, said to exhibit the divine nature, with the mild dignity of the meek and lowly Jesus, the triumphant cross in his hand, girt with a brazen towel, while his extended foot is also of brass, I thought within myself, how poor, and mean, must be the boldest flight (which Michael Angelo's certainly was), in conceiving the dignity and majesty of Him 'who sitteth at the right hand of God,' while no trace or description is given, whilst on earth, of the lineaments of that 'man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief,' 'who took our nature upon him.' In these, my meditations, I was interrupted by a bustle, unusual in that gloomy quiet church: a small procession of *religieuses* approached near where I stood. Slipping behind a pillar, to let them pass, among the

attendant Priests I discovered the Oxford student, who had apartments in the same Palazza with myself. A religious office commenced, in which he took a part, and watching him closely, I felt convinced I was not mistaken in his identity. After the service (the nature of which I did not understand at the time) was concluded, and the procession had retired by a side aisle, I enquired of an acolyte, belonging to the church, 'what it meant!' He could merely tell, that he believed them to be members of an order, under a solewn vow, for 'the conversion of Heretic *Inglese* !' "

CHAPTER XXIII.

Mankind are his shew box—a friend would you know him !
Pull the string, ruling passion the picture will show him.
What pity, in rearing so beauteous a system,
One trifling particular—Truth—should have miss'd him.

BURNS.

“**T**HAT evening, as I strolled out in company with the Priest, and his Oxford friend, through the Porta Angelica, to enjoy the cool refreshing breeze on Monte Mario, and its matchless and extended view, I suddenly turned to the young Collegian, and asked him abruptly, ‘when was it he had become a Priest of Rome.’ The question evidently took him by surprise; for a moment he was unable to answer; but his friend, the Jesuit, came to his relief, and acted his part to a miracle, covering, with much tact, the visible confusion of the less disciplined Oxfordian, by asking me, in return, in a tone of well feigned surprise, ‘what could have put such a preposterous idea in my head.’ I candidly related my adventure in the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, and my conviction that I was not mistaken in the identity of one of the officiating priests. Mr. Freshman—for that was the name of the Oxford student—recovered his presence of mind sufficiently to break out into a forced laugh, at ‘my great imaginative powers;’ while his friend, Father Ignatius, volunteered an *alibi* for him, at the very hour the procession took place, which I had omitted mentioning; thus convincing me, more than ever, that neither my ears nor eyes had deceived me. I did not conceal the conviction of my senses, notwithstanding the Oxford man’s derisive laugh, at the

‘absurdity of mistaking a Priest for him,’ and his friend’s grave assurance, that he was in his company, in a distant part of the city, at the precise hour this religious office was performed. ‘But this precise hour,’ I coolly returned, ‘was unnamed by me.’ The brow of Father Ignatius glowed for a moment, it was livid the next instant, and we pursued our walk, with an air of restraint pervading all parties, first interrupted by the Priest proposing we should take the invigorating exercise of ascending to the summit of Monte Mario, and enjoy its glorious view at sunset. The proposal was a relief in itself, and the exercise of climbing up its steep and rugged ascent, involuntarily drew away our attention from dwelling on the *contretemps* that had just occurred. And as we seated ourselves, for a temporary rest, on almost its highest acclivity, no one could perceive there had been any interruption to our former friendly intercourse. I have often since thought, what a profound judge of the *physique* and *morale* of poor human nature, was that same Father Ignatius. The very exercise he had so adroitly engaged me in, prevented my mind brooding over any scheme, or plot, I might have attributed to him or his friend, by my untimely recognition of the latter, and equally disagreeable detection of his own too accurately given secondary evidence; while the view from the commanding summit he brought me to, absorbed my whole attention. How minute, and vast, appeared ‘the Rome of ancient days,’ and the ‘City of the Popes,’ mapped out, as it were, by some monster draughtsman, lying at our feet! the lofty Apennines in the distance—the serpent-like Tiber, winding its way through Pagan ruins—and glittering domes of countless Churches, Palazzas, and buildings of Christian dates—while the blue waters of the Mediterranean sparkled in the sun’s last rays, deeply contrasting with the dark groves of Cypress and Pine, that interspersed, here and there, this matchless and all engrossing prospect. The shades of twilight had fallen on us, before we reached the Palazza Rubestianini. Heated and

fatigued, I flung myself on a couch, and drank eagerly the glass of lemonade handed me by my servant. The Priest and Mr. Freshman preferred coffee, as a less dangerous beverage, drank when warm, after so long and harassing a walk. My mind was full of the glorious view I had been so recently gazing on, it was the brightest and last I was to enjoy for some time; a deep overwhelming drowsiness seemed to press down my eyelids, and to weigh on my limbs. I had no wish to fight against it, and sunk into a lethargic sleep, that lasted for hours. I was awakened out of this unnatural dose by my servant, who represented that my moaning, while I slept, was most alarming. The Priest and his friend had retired, he said, a few moments after they drank their coffee; and almost my first sensation on being awakened, was an excruciating sense of pain in my eyes. I could merely distinguish there was light in the apartment; but every object was indistinct and shrouded in darkness. My servant bathed my eyelids to no purpose—I was all but blind; and the pain I endured was trying in the extreme. The man, who was an Italian, went for a physician in a neighbouring street, and on his way knocked up the Priest, who came at once to my assistance. The Italian doctor was told of my long and overcoming walk, the view I had so eagerly and intently gazed on, and the glass of lemonade I had so incautiously drank, when heated; and after a brief consultation with the Priest, pronounced me as suffering from a severe and sudden attack of *gutta serena*—in fact, I was hopelessly blind. Oh! the agony of that hour, to be all at once deprived of the blessings of sight, so shortly, too, after enjoying the rapturous prospects I had gazed on so enthusiastically; but a few hours before, my heart rebelled against the infliction; days and weeks passed by, without finding me resigned, as I should be, to my darkened lot. From the apartment I occupied every ray of light was excluded, so that I could hardly judge how far my vision was impaired; but the physician's orders were imperative, that my sole hope of restoration to sight, was

submitting to live in unbroken darkness. Oh ! how I welcomed the voice of Father Ignatius, as it broke on my ear each day, like a gleam of sunshine in some gloomy cavern. 'My vision,' as he called it, 'in the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, was merely a precursor of the fierce attack that deprived me of sight so shortly after.' And I believed him, and apologised to Mr. Freshman for my persevering rudeness, in my diseased vision, mistaking him for another ; in fact, indirectly accusing him of acting a sort of clandestine part ; while Father Ignatius, by mentioning, as if casually, that such services as I saw performed, always took place at a certain hour, entirely removed from my mind the impression that those gentlemen had used towards me any deception. The Oxfordian soon after returned to his College ; and as I had no acquaintance at Rome, or at least none with whom I was intimate, I was thrown entirely into the power of Father Ignatius ; and to tell how he watched over me, and amused and interested my mind, during the long hopeless days that succeeded each other, without variation, or event to distinguish one from another, is more than I am equal to ; suffice it to say, that my spirits enervated, and my health shaken by confinement, and the loss of sight, the ascendancy this gifted-designing man gained daily over me, I now shudder to contemplate ; gradually he led my mind to dwell almost entirely on the great blessing I had been deprived of, until its restoration seemed to be the only hope I was to live for. Then a vague surmise would be expressed, that 'Faith could cure what defied the physician's skill ;' while he would ingeniously argue from Scripture, that there was no limited time named when miracles should cease in the Christian Church. With my nervous system prostrate from the total and monotonous seclusion I lived in, with no healthy aliment for the mind, but, on the contrary, my mental physician feeding me up with fanciful chimeras, dressed to suit my diseased craving after the blessing I supposed withdrawn for ever, there were times when this man's voice

could persuade me the laws of nature might be suspended in my particular case, and the prayer of faith could make the blind man see. 'The Church, and the true infallible Church alone, possessed the power of offering up this prayer of faith effectually,' was the next lesson the Jesuit tried to teach me. But the Lord deserted me not in those trying moments. I prayed aloud for help; in my hour of darkness and desertion, I cried aloud, and He heard me. 'Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ,' I might well say, for he opened my mental eyes to see the gulph on whose brink I stood, to see and feel my own sinful rebellion in not submitting myself entirely to His holy will and pleasure, and seeking that comfort and support in His Holy word, that he has promised 'throughout all generations.' I felt how wrong I had been to cultivate and appreciate, as I did, the conversation and friendship of a man who held doctrines directly opposed to gospel truths; and bringing my case to the test of that great touchstone—the word of God—I was enabled, through divine grace, to pluck out, as it were, this 'right hand,' and 'right eye,' lest one who had attained such mastery over my feelings and influence, in my weak nervous state, should cause me 'to offend.'

"In our very next interview I told Father Ignatius of my recent resolve to hold no further intercourse with him, and simply and firmly avowed my sincere and rooted conviction of salvation by faith alone in the Son of God, and an entire submission to His blessed will, as directed by the Scriptures of Truth, written for the guidance of sinful and fallen man. He attempted to remonstrate and argue me out of this decision; while he appealed to my feelings as to its injustice, in banishing so harshly one who esteemed me so truly as he did, for ever from my society. But I had 'counted the cost' of the sacrifice, and remained inflexible. For a week I never heard his voice, but I heard his soft cautious step daily in my room; at the end of that time he made an appeal to our former friendship, to

allow him even occasionally to come near me, that wrung my heart with anguish to refuse ; still, I felt mind and body were failing, and saw my spiritual danger too clearly. 'Would you,' I cried, 'be so cruel as to deprive my mind of light—spiritual light—that keeps me calm and steadfast, trusting in the great atonement of a Saviour's love, though clouds and darkness are round about me, sustained and upheld by a Heavenly Father's hand, passing through the dark dreary waters of affliction? Oh, no! Leave me to ponder in peace on God's precious promises, and seek not to blind the eyes of my soul, by extinguishing the light of truth within me, drawing me, by human sophistry, into a superstitious belief in that Church of Antichrist, whose distinguishing mark in the Holy Scriptures is 'lying miracles.' 'Then die everlastingly in your sins,' he cried, in a voice of thunder. 'Like Judas, some can never be saved, and you are one of that number.' The scales now dropped completely off my mental eyes, but I had a longer period to endure the severe trial of believing my physical orbs were sightless. The physicians had ordered my eyes to be closely bandaged, and from being so constantly covered, the skin became delicate, and susceptible of every variation of temperature. About this time an old friend hunted me out in Rome. It was your father," continued Mr. Warner, nodding to young Stamer, "who, with Mrs. Stamer, visited Italy about this time. He cheered me up wonderfully, even during our first interview, but in our second, he persuaded me to have the bandage removed from my eyes; and judge my delight at actually seeing the countenance of my old friend. 'I hate darkness,' he cried, and so had a little bit of the window opened, that I might see how you looked.

"I told him all, and he at once suggested the danger of my remaining longer in Rome, where every day men were seized and incarcerated, for an indefinite period of time, too often for life, if suspected of being aware of the unprincipled designs of Jesuitism. My sight was much impaired, not only by what had been dropped into

my eyes the night I drank the drugged lemonade, but from being bandaged so closely ; any strong light affected my weakened vision most painfully, and with a green shade over eyes that had never suffered from disease, I bid adieu to the Palazzo Rubestianini, that had been so dexterously turned into an inquisitorial prison by my Jesuit friend, and discharging my Italian servant as I was just starting, left Rome, I hoped for ever, in company with my worthy friend, whose energy and forethought entirely planned and carried out my flight from this doomed city. Our journey was rapid and prosperous, and I was no longer an invalid when I reached London. Some of the most eminent of the faculty, after examining my eyes, unhesitatingly pronounced that no disease had ever existed, and that my sense of seeing was entirely unimpaired. As a thank-offering to the Lord, for my spiritual, as well as bodily deliverance, I entered the ministry, though not then a very young man, and possessing a handsome independence ; but in devoting my feeble powers for the furtherance of that Gospel that saved me from the darkness of a slavish superstition, and brought me into marvellous light, I felt a joy and peace no man can take from me, while I warn others to ' touch not, taste not ' of the sorceries of this Apostate Church, or perhaps, like me, they will be made to feel, though perhaps not enabled to escape from, its deadly power."

"The Oxford man—what became of him?" asked Charles Stamer, with a face unusually earnest and grave, while Frank Lee, evidently much *distract* during the latter part of Mr. Warner's story, had been taking sly peeps at his watch, out of the corner of his waistcoat pocket.

"Oh," resumed Mr. Warner, "I did not meet him for years, and then in print, the leading writer of the '*Tracts for the Times*;' and happening to visit, many years after, my old friend in whose society I first met him, I discovered this celebrated Tractarian had never lost sight of him, but had cultivated his friendship most assiduously, causing, by his artful reasoning, many doubts to arise

from time to time in the mind of this good man, as to the efficacy of non-essentials in the great scheme of salvation ; but my friend's faith was founded on the Rock of Ages, and the structure of miry clay, the inventions and conceits of man, lodged on its surface by the conceited Jesuit, could not destroy the foundation. With the sword of the Spirit, I dug hard to remove the rubbish, and related my then firm conviction that I had seen and heard Dr. Freshman, at that time a fellow of Oxford College, officiate, years before, as a Romish priest, in the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, at Rome. My friend wisely withdrew from all intercourse with this double-faced Tractarian, who, not long since, was received with great pomp into the Papal Church, after poisoning for years, as an Oxford divine, not only the public mind, but tainting the Protestant youth of Oxford, committed to his care, with Popish tenets, the poison more deadly in its effects for being disguised under the wholesome semblance of Truth."

"Dr. Freshman was openly received into the Church of Rome," said Charles Stamer ; "but you are quite right, my dear Sir, as to his being a priest in it years before. I was admitted," he added with a slight laugh, "a little behind the scenes, on account of my mother's faith. It is now well known to the initiated, he never received Priest's orders, after his public profession ; it is only supposed he was admitted privately into Holy orders, in the College of Saint Philip, of Neri, where he resided, after going over to Mother Church." And the young man smiled ironically, and almost bitterly.

"My old physician," said Mr. Warner, "is now Monsignor Reynard, the avowed and acknowledged head of a Jesuit Propaganda, and I am but a country parson ; and by private letter, and through the public press, have challenged both these dignitaries to come forward on the platform, and give a 'reason for the hope that is in them,' and from the Scriptures prove the doctrines they disseminate to be true ; while I have, with the Word of God in my hand, undertaken to analyse the

poison of the Church of Rome, and prove, before men and angels, its apostasy, from the great truths of Christianity."

"The challenge was, I'll venture to say, declined," observed Charles Stamer drily.

"They would not condescend to argue with me now," returned the old gentleman laughing. "I am no longer at Rome, groping in mental and bodily darkness."

Frank Lee stood up, and again looked at his watch, and muttered something about an apology, for not joining Mrs. Stanley in the drawing-room; while Charles Stamer, with that decision of manner which usually characterised his movements, opened the folding door that communicated with the next room, and briefly explained to the lady in occupation, seated near the window finishing a letter, while her children were practically learning geography, by uniting component parts of sundry dissected maps, at an adjoining table, "That his friend, Mr. Lee, had made an engagement for the evening, which compelled him to leave earlier than he otherwise should, as he had promised to give him a *cade* in his dog cart, which his groom had brought over to drive back to Fosterton Park." He omitted mentioning, however, that his groom had told him before dinner, when questioned as to following his master without orders, that he had heard Captain Gardner desiring Rimino to have "Mr. Stamer's dog cart sent early to Wellmine, after him," and that Rimino had told him, "His master would expect him."

"I shall soon pay you another visit," said young Stamer, as Mrs. Stanley regretted his leaving so early. "I cannot tell you how much I have enjoyed this day," he added, "nor how many important matters it has suggested to my mind, to brood over; but," continued he, turning towards a cabinet, on which were placed some books, "there is a book here I must ask you to lend me, I will return it carefully some time or another."

Mrs. Stanley assured him all her books were at his disposal; and Charles Stamer quietly slipped into his

pocket a small diamond edition of the Bible, that his quick eye had rested on during the morning.

Frank Lee here entered hurriedly to make his bow, and escape from Mr. Warner's directions respecting the poor people, whose spiritual interests were now confided to his care.

As young Stamer gathered up the reins, and started at a smart pace, he said with an air of chagrin—"I am sorry, Lee, you set your heart so confoundedly on spending this evening at Fosterton Park, I had so much to talk over with Mr. Warner, and may not have an opportunity, for some time again."

"He talked so much himself to day," returned Frank Lee, laughing, "that he quite seemed to forget any other person present had conversational powers, so I don't think you could have managed well to say your say."

"Why," returned his companion, "you were evidently dreaming after dinner, and his subject interested me too deeply to feel inclined to talk much; and then, the fine benign old man does relate a story so well, and so much to the point, so clear, and so upright in his views, I could listen to him for ever, without being tired."

Frank Lee yawned, and a touch of his companion's whip sent his high mettled horse off at top speed, and no remark was made by either of the young men the remainder of the drive.

"What happened, Stamer, to day?" asked Captain Gardner of Frank Lee, as the latter hung over Mrs. Fosterton, while she played an accompaniment for one of those thrilling melodies, half hymn, half ballad, she had coaxed her military friend to sing.

"I am sure I can't say," returned the young clergyman, glancing towards where his friend sat apart with Julia Mellworth, seemingly engaged in grave, earnest conversation, that apparently partook more of argument than of love.

"I suppose he is impressing his fair companion with some of his old friend, Mr. Warner's ideas; I thought

I should never get him away this evening, he was so much taken with the worthy man's long-winded stories, of his adventures at Rome."

"Fudge!" exclaimed Captain Gardner, frowning; "what does such a dull, unpoetic nature as this matter of fact old parson's, comprehend of the city of saints and sages? no more than some hungry crow, who croaks in the ivy tower of a cloistered abbey does of the solemn chaunt of holy men before the high altar. He only thought, I suppose, of the place as a roost, for every-day, common-place people like himself, and was disappointed, of course, that a Lutheran service would not sound well 'midst the lofty aisles of St. Peter's."

Frank Lee joined in Mrs. Fosterton's expressive laugh.

"What could such a nature, indeed, understand of all-delightful Rome?" cried she, enthusiastically, "full of mystery, wonder, music, painting, sculpture, devotion, and pleasure—a vast cathedral of enchantment and enjoyment; only those whose souls are moved by its witcheries, can realise the visions of that cloud-land, and comprehend—even dimly—what art and genius have combined to produce."

With a look of rapturous admiration, Frank Lee gazed on the fair speaker, almost unconscious of the words she uttered, so wrapt up was this impressionable young man in the contemplation of her beautiful face, lit up by an enthusiasm as ardent as his own.

"Sir Anthony," said Captain Gardner, to the baronet, who approached where he stood, "set those young people dancing"—and he glanced significantly towards Charles Stamer and Julia Mellworth. "I will take your place, Mrs. Fosterton," he added, "and play a polka, while you enlighten Mr. Lee with a descriptive glimpse of that wondrous city, you so beautifully and justly designate 'all-delightful Rome.' " And Captain Gardner's fingers ran over the instrument as if his life had been spent in acquiring the music of the dance, so faultless was the time he kept in the spirited polka he now executed;

while Mrs. Fosterton and Frank Lee, seated near, on a low ottoman, their voices undistinguishable, except to each other, from their proximity to the swelling notes of the piano, while their eyes spoke a language neither dare interpret, the lady dwelling with rapture on the revelations of "all-delightful Rome," the gentleman drinking the intoxicating draught thus presented to his imagination, with an enthusiasm kindred to her own.

Among the waltzers Charles Stamer was not ; for when Sir Anthony, in his jocose manner, proposed that he and Miss Julia Mellworth should join in a polka, both looked annoyed, and the former quitted the room immediately after, and did not return during the evening, and though Captain Gardner relinquished his place at the instrument to somebody else, and solicited "the honor of a polka" of the deserted young lady, the "honor" was almost ungraciously declined ; and though the gallant Captain seated himself beside the impracticable fair one, and put forth his powers to please, she remained dull and spiritless, complaining of fatigue and head-ache, from her exertions of the night before ; while her sister, from a distance, glanced a look of wonder at Julia's indifference to the rare fascination of an accomplished actor, who could pique her own coquette nature—for heart she had none ; and she now charitably determined to plague him in return, the first opportunity that should offer, by a pretended knowledge of some matter she felt convinced his present attentions to Julia were intended to elicit.

Mr. Fosterton was deep in blind hookey, with some of his male visitors in an adjoining room, and an insipid Burletta was got up for this evening ; but everybody was too tired to act ; and so ended the theatricals at Fosterton Park, paragraphed, in the course of the week, through the local papers, and forgotten by every one but the silly curate of Fosterton, who lost his heart to the "Cauldron's Witch," and the tradesmen of Fosterton, whose bills remained unpaid.

CHAPTER XXIV.

For mystery is man's life; we wake to the whisperings of novelty.
Men who fear no God, trembling at a gipsy's curse.

PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

THE tide of visitors had ebbed from Fosterton Park. None remained but General Mellworth and his daughters, with their attendant squire, Captain Gardner.

Charles Stamer had been staying for a day or two with his friend, Mr. Warner, and was to return to Stamer Castle the morning after this chapter opens.

Old General Mellworth had caught a severe twinge of gout, and was laid up in his dressing-room, with a bulky foot wrapped in flannels, the afflicted limb nearly as extensive in its dimensions as the shrunk and attenuated body of the withered veteran, who, very cross, and very apprehensive of a protracted campaign with his ancient foe, the gout, grumbled over the morning papers, dull to insipidity, with parliament prorogued, varied occasionally by his daughter Julia reading aloud for him an article from the "Naval and Military," writing his letters, and listening to the querulous and peevish impatience of an old gentleman, imprisoned *contre gré*, who had spent the greater part of his life in locomotion. His eldest daughter visited him daily, during his afternoon nap, and contented herself with writing a dutiful regret in pencilling, on a fly-leaf of some book, within reach of his gouty chair, expressive of her chagrin in not finding "dear papa awake," sure to irritate and annoy the irascible General, whose favourite hallucination was, that he never slept, and, with much heat and excitement, proved, during the remainder of the day, at least to his

daughter Julia's satisfaction, there were no poppy heads beneath the pillow his irate countenance rested on. But Julia was in an admirable mood for listening, for she was glad to escape from more observant eyes, to think, and retired to the cross-grained old man's dressing-room, as a sort of sanctuary, where she could indulge her own feelings, unrestrained by the presence of her sister and Captain Gardner, while, with a preoccupied mind, she remained perfectly insensible to the external annoyance of hearing repeated, over and over again, undignified complaints and peevish exclamations from the aged General, who all his life had been commanding others, but had never acquired that superior art to "taking a city," learning to "rule his own spirit."

A shadow had passed between her and Charles Stamer. Why she could not tell, but still the shadow was there; and one of those inexplicable, but convincing impressions, that visit the human mind, without the assistance of facts to suggest, or the reasoning powers to draw conclusions from, whispered to her heart, that shadow bore the semblance of Captain Gardner.

And now, as she watched from her father's dressing-room window, that gentleman and her lover, who had arrived at Fosterton Park early that morning, equipped as sportmen, followed by dogs and gamekeepers, cross the lawn, an expression of disappointment and almost of terror flitted across the fair face of Julia Mellworth, like a sudden squall over some summer lake, portending a coming storm, or a clear blue Heaven suddenly overcast with dark and threatening clouds, surcharged with sleet and rain. Her eager gaze followed the shooting party until they were lost in a distant copse, and then a prayer arose from her heart, and quivered on her lip, why, she could not tell, for the safety of one dearer to her than ever at that moment of partial estrangement. She had promised herself that on that day, the last he was to spend at Fosterton Park, Charles Stamer would have sought an opportunity to explain to her much that was unaccountable in his manner since the night they acted

together in "Il Barbiere di Siviglia." He was absent and reserved, speaking gravely and earnestly on the hitherto interdicted subject between them of religion, rather shunning than courting her society, even while he remained in the same house; and then, after a day or so, he left, without any explanation to her, merely a short note delivered to Mr. Fosterton, after he actually had gone to Wellmine. She had not met him since his return that morning, and now to go out, absolutely to avoid meeting her, poor Julia's little heart swelled with grief and indignation, while an indescribable fear haunted her imagination of danger to her lover, some way connected with his companion in that day's sport, and of sorrow to them both. Pale, and anxious looking, she filled out the General's breakfast, giving him a far more liberal supply of cream than the accurate old veteran coveted, and reducing his sugar ration by one-half.

"Julia, my dear child, what can you be thinking of?" exclaimed the gouty invalid, impatiently. "Here you have given me as much milk as would float a seventy-four, and but one lump of sugar, and that a small one. I think," he added, as he glanced at the haggard expression of her young, thoughtful face, so different from its wonted look of bright intelligence, "that you have shut yourself up too much with me. I have been suffering so dreadfully with this cruel gout, I never remarked how badly you are looking until now; indeed, I was in such pain. I am sure I never looked at you. But you must go out to-day, child, and recover your good looks by a drive. Send Smith to inquire if Laura's maid is stirring. She has only seen me asleep for the last week, so to-day I must show her I am awake sometimes. Mrs. Fosterton will, I am sure, drive you out, and, after you come in, you can write my letters."

Julia mechanically obeyed, for she felt so oppressed, the open air would, indeed, be relief.

Miss Mellworth overpowered the General with kindness. She was so officious—so meddlesome in all his little matters, that he had so accurately arranged on the

table beside him; then she volunteered to read for him, but was sure to read the paper he had been poring over the day before. Again, she worried him with so many questions, and asked others before she had given him time to answer those she had just propounded, that, to the relief of both, the thoroughly annoyed old gentleman requested to be left alone with his own man, Smith; and this consummate actress shook up the pillows of his invalid chair, arranging them in a diametrically opposite position to the mode Julia placed them in, to ensure her father's comfort, and wishing "dear papa a comfortable nap," an addenda, sure to keep him awake from pure irritation at being supposed even to feel an inclination to sleep, glided out of the room, quite satisfied her presence there would not be requested during the remainder of "dear papa's" gouty campaign, while she hastened to be present at a *scéance*, got up in the governess's morning room, to hold a colloquy with disembodied spirits, who the lady of the chamber was to summon for her fair visitor's special benefit, in answering sundry questions, known only to this accomplished actress, who piqued herself on never betraying to others anything like her own real feelings; and half sceptical, half believing, she looked forward to a response to these, her own inward thoughts, with an intensity of interest seldom excited in a mind so *blasé* as hers.

Mrs. Fosterton was wild—in a delirium of delight. The governess Sir Anthony Reynard's sister had procured for her was a perfect treasure of art; she had a voice that would have secured the fortune of a *prima donna*, understood picturesque effect better than any living artist, was learned without pedantry, devout without cant, and acted the Demon's part in the "Witch's Cauldron," a miracle of histrionic art; then, she was so profound in her application of the great mysteries of nature and religion—was so gifted-looking—could inspire with a portion of that living fire, that, like a live coal on the altar of her own heart, burnt for herself, but its flame illumined eyes, wondrous in their power, for the

benefit of others ! Mesmerizer—clairvoyant rapping *medium*, as she was, the governess Fosterton left nothing to be wished for.

The interesting child committed to her care six years of age, already felt the power of her preceptress, who instructed the youthful and beautiful little pupil, after a peculiar fashion, things than words, while the infant mind was by a spiritual terrorism, that left her powerless the slightest glance of one who held converse in dominion over that dark, unreal world, the young was taught to people with visions of terror, reborn by the beautiful, and good lady, who carried her in her arms, and that Louise was to love and adore this powerful Virgin Queen, above all other things, to save and keep her from wicked people, and evil spirits, if Louise prayed the *Ave Maria* before the mother's image, and never told she did so to any but Miss Herbert ; in fact, Louise learnt her lesson of deceit ; and her imaginative mother's *éclat* of her late successful acting died away, and the departure of her numerous visitors left her spirit *ennuyé*, gladly caught at new objects of interest, and Louise's governess was ready to supply her place. The little girl was mesmerised by Miss Herbert, the mother was mesmerised, and Mrs. Fosterton, in turn mesmerised, and, with the assistance of a few drops of subtle essence, saw visions, and dreamed dreams that would shame the Apocalypse. The spiritualism was thus established over the mother's mind, the daughter's, and the profound secret of how to converse with the dead was suggested to Mrs. Fosterton by Miss Herbert, in tones of mystery and excitement, while it froze, the blood within her veins, she communicated the intelligence to her husband upon it as, perhaps, a clever actor acted *character* no time in telling Miss Mellworth, whom he had to amuse, and who, but for Captain Gardner, would have been in despair, at the General's inopportu-

gout, and complained sadly as it was, though the Captain remained expressly as her *preux chevalier*, that she lost the best piece of acting on her list, a charming got up Opera, at Lord Wardminster's, with professional talent to support her in some of the most trying scenes ; in fact, the *bonne bouche* of the season ; so it was only reasonable for her to be allowed to wear a dejected and discontented air, though, in her heart, she rejoiced that her worthy father's teasing malady had secured for her an opportunity of playing off a *scena* of fine acting, on one in real life, whose powers at playing a part this genuine actress so highly appreciated.

Since the departure of other visitors, this well-matched pair had been busily engaged in hunting up authorities for the Fostertons to carry out, after the most approved pattern, the Mediæval Chapel, that was to occupy the space the late Theatre filled ; and it was curious to observe, how ingeniously "the Stage," "Green-room," and "House," were metamorphosed into a Romanesque Crypt, with "nave," "transept," "road-screen," and "altar." Then came the trying question, as to the abolition of the Pulpit, and here parties divided ; and "Fronde's Remains" were quoted, and "Dr. Freshman's Reply to Biblicus" cited, and Mr. Lee's services engaged, to decide the knotty point, while Mrs. Fosterton privately consulted Miss Herbert, and the Oracle looked ominous, and mysteriously grave, but was reluctant to consult "the Spirits" about a question "the true Church" had decided on so many centuries before.

There was a pause in the building of the sanctuary, that annoyed both Mr. and Mrs. Fosterton extremely, as both wished to get up *spectacles* of every kind, quickly ; and the former had secretly determined that the richly carved pulpit of stone, insisted on by Miss Mellworth, should not be erected, as wood, painted to represent cut solid masonry, would look quite as well, and no person need know anything at all about it ; and Mr. Fosterton, who would affect the *savant* at times, talked very learnedly of having no pulpit at all, and turned his attention

patrons; the Fostertons turned over the leaves, it is true, of the amount of theology Dean Shuffell so liberally supplied them with, but there was nothing found to elucidate the mooted point in question, respecting the erection, or non-erection, of a pulpit. There was far better, had they read it, no doubt; for even at a cursory glance, there was much to condemn—the trumpery filigree work, and Church millinery, wrought by the concealed Jesuits of Oxford, to draw away men's attention from fundamental principles, those simple soul-stirring truths taught by the Apostles, and advocated by those men, who had laid down their lives for the faith delivered to the Saints.

Captain Gardner saw at once the danger of referring to the writings of the early reformers respecting forms and ceremonies, that they had treated as mere non-essentials, and produced his favorite text book, "*Fronde's Remains*," to prove that Jewell was "an irreverent dissenter," and that "Ridley" could not be relied on, for he was the associate of "Cranmer, Peter Martyr, and Bucer." The noble army of Protestant Martyrs, thus reflected on by such competent and valid authority, were sent back in disgrace, to take up their position on the shelves of Dean Shuffell's library; and that worthy dignitary himself, unless he kept pace with the times, yielding as he was on religious subjects, ran some risk of being considered nearly as obsolete and uninteresting as the pages of a far different order of men, that intrepid band of Reformers, who advocated with "the simple and wise," "the natural and holy," the pure and spiritual religion of the Gospel.

There was a "restlessness" in the feelings of the Fostertons, that turned with avidity from sound principles to the mysterious charlatanism of modern Tractarian writers; it was a piece of clever ingenuity to discover, with Dr. Pusey, in his "earnest remonstrances," that "they might pray for their departed friends, because the Church of England had nowhere expressly forbid it;" quite overlooking a great fact, that the English Church, by her Articles, set up the paramount authority

of that Scripture, wherein was written in Eccles., ix. chap., 5 verse—"The dead have not any more a reward, neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun." So it was, that in discovering, with Fronde, that "the Reformation was a limb badly set, and must be broken again to be righted," there was much to excite the imagination, and employ the attention, as well as to pique curiosity, in discovering the "visible Temple" where Truth dwelt; and with the gallant Captain for a pioneer, they abandoned the pilotage of God's Word, and plunged rudderless into the sea of vain men's thoughts, clothed in attractive jargon, to meet the development of the age, in "Tracts for the Times."

With the same flippancy, Mrs. Fosterton and her clever friend, Miss Mellworth, pronounced on the relative merits of the glorious martyr, Hooker, and the pious Jeremy Taylor; with the dogmas insinuated, rather than propounded, by such covert Jesuits as Dr. Freshman & Co., did they now enter the darkened morning room of Miss Herbert, to discourse with the spirits of departed friends, who were supposed to be in attendance, ready to answer the most trivial and absurd questions those ladies' imaginations could suggest.

Mrs. Fosterton had felt reluctant to introduce her friend to Miss Herbert on this occasion, who assured her that only those who had the most trusting faith in spiritualism could be brought into *rapport* with the living dead; and with a feeling of mistrust in the fair actress's bump of veneration, did she allow herself to be teased into prevailing on this gifted *medium*, to summon the spirits in the presence of her friend, who now was admitted, for the first time, after much solicitation and negotiation on the part of her hostess, into the presence of the Demon of "The Witch's Cauldron."

The room was partially darkened, admitting only sufficient light, on first entering, to discover the figure of a lady, standing near a round table placed in its centre.

As Miss Mellworth's eyes became more accustomed to the obscure light, she could observe that the lady who

bowed coldly to her, on being introduced by Mrs. Fosterton, was somewhat above the middle size, with a face so clearly pale, that she might have been taken for the dead she held such close communion with, while her eyes shone out so dark and luminous, that Miss Mellworth thought such a face would outrival Siddons in tragedy : her dress was of black silk, loose and flowing, and her profuse dark hair was wound round a brow and head a Madonna might have been modelled from.

"You wish to communicate with the dead," she said, addressing the younger lady, in a low voice, yet so clear and distinct it startled the fair actress ; but summoning her habitual presence of mind, she answered, in a tone she wished to appear careless, "Why, yes, if spirits will consent to answer from the 'vasty deep.'"

The lady turned her full melancholy eyes on the face of the speaker, while Mrs. Fosterton exclaimed—"Laura, you must be serious in this matter ; I thought you assured me your faith was unbounded in Miss Herbert's power to command their presence."

"You are not a materialist?" asked the lady, interrogatively, "nor yet a negative," she added, laying her icy cold hand on Miss Mellworth's fevered fingers, through whose veins the blood was careering warmly from this newly discovered excitement. "The temperament is magnetic," she said slowly, aloud, but as if speaking some preconceived idea of her own, wherein she had been mistaken. "The individual is 'positive' and intellectual," she continued in the same tone ; then addressing Miss Mellworth, after a moment's pause, she added, "Madam, you are no sceptic," in a voice so firm, and far removed from doubt, as to convince the young lady herself the sybil was not mistaken in her believing attributes. "You will please occupy this chair on my left," she said gravely, motioning to a chair that was placed near the round table she stood beside.

Miss Mellworth sat down as indicated, and made an effort to rally her powers of observation to discover what might be, notwithstanding her own "magnetic tempera-

ment," but a clever bit of acting she would have enjoyed vastly detecting.

"You will please be seated here, Madam, on my right," observed the *medium*, addressing Mrs. Fosterton.

And with a look of intense enjoyment, that lady took possession of the chair, placed at some distance from her friend's, and placing, as a practised spirit-rapper, both hands extended on the table, uniting the thumb of either, with a glance signified Miss Mellworth should follow her example, while the dark-eyed *medium* stood between the "positive" and "negative," seated at either side, and extending hands spirit-like in their transparent and colourless beauty, said to Miss Mellworth, in a grave tone, "You will commence with the letter A." Then, after a slight pause, she added, "You must first, Madam, by an exercise of your own will, command the spirits mentally to reply to your queries."

The young lady nodded in acquiescence.

"Spirits, are you ready?" demanded the *medium*, in a voice so mysteriously startling, so full of awe, yet of power, that Miss Mellworth's usual command of countenance forsook her, and it was with a look of terror she glanced towards Mrs. Fosterton, who gasped for breath hysterically, as three distinct knocks were heard on the round table near which they sat.

Still, the actress had been too much accustomed to shifting scenes and stage trap-doors, to feel quite disconcerted, and with an effort she now said hurriedly, "Pray excuse me," and took an investigating look under the round table, so recently rapped on; but no trace of the presiding *genii* was visible, and with a slight confusion of manner, puzzled and mystified, she leaned forward and resumed the extended position of her hands on the table.

"Write," cried the sybil, in an authoritative tone, fixing her almost unearthly dark eyes on the face of the baffled actress—"Write your inmost thought, and ask its solution of the past, the present, or the future."

Miss Mellworth hesitated, and did not make use of the pencil and paper that lay on the table.

"I shall spell it, then," added the *medium*, scoffingly, "and the Spirits shall answer." After a pause, the governess slowly enunciated the letter "A."

A single rap on the table was the response.

A blush passed over the eyes rather than the brow of Miss Mellworth, as she wrote the letter "A" on the sheet of note-paper before her.

"B," demanded the sybil.

No answering rap came, and so on she repeated in a distinct slow voice each succeeding letter of the alphabet, beginning at the letter "A" each time, until Miss Mellworth had transcribed "Alfred Gardner;" the individual letters of which name had been indicated by a loud distinct rap on the table.

"Write now," cried the *medium*, "your inmost thought."

And with some hesitation, Miss Mellworth transcribed four words. With a look of searching enquiry into the darkened space before her, with the abstracted gaze a ghost seer might be supposed to wear, the governess slowly enunciated—

"Does he love me?"

The woman, not the actress, felt her temples throb like fire, as three distinct raps were heard, almost felt, on the table underneath where her hands rested. Each spirit had notified this delightful assurance by a separate rap. Mrs. Fosterton was in ecstasies, as she saw the sceptic look vanish from her friend's countenance, while to cover her confusion, Miss Mellworth wrote a sentence rapidly.

"How many killed or wounded shall he bring home to-day?" slowly and solemnly enquired the spirit, with the same fixed look on vacancy as before.

A single rap sounded almost like a death knell on the table.

Again Miss Mellworth wrote, determined to discover the truth or falsehood of the Oracle, and the governess still gazing on vacancy, repeated slowly—

"Grouse?"

No response came; smiling at her own expedient, the

enquiring lady wrote again, "partridge;" and "partridge" was repeated solemnly, by the *medium*, and no rap replied.

"He must have killed or wounded something?" said Miss Mellworth, regaining some of her evaporated confidence; "for that dead rap told of the slain." And she wrote, while she faintly laughed, one word.

Had the spell-bound looking *medium* been an answering spirit herself, she could not have enquired with a more awful and melancholy tone—

"Woodcock?"

Still no rap came.

"You doubt, Madam," said the *medium*, in a grave, severe tone, turning her thrilling eyes on the face of Miss Mellworth, "you doubt, and wish to test 'the electrical affinity' between the corporeal living and the quickened dead; be it so, the spirits of 'the lowest circle' are in *rapport*, and must respond, for your 'magnetic temperament' is not a repeller.

"I have exhausted the game list," replied Miss Mellworth, in as careless a tone as she could assume; "spirits, I suppose, do not condescend to individualise, to convince doubting mortals of their presence?" And with those dark, strange eyes fixed on her face, she made an effort to rise from her chair, but though she felt almost convinced her senses had been in some way imposed on, by the unaccountable raps on the table, yet within her was a reluctance to withdraw from the presence of the *medium*, that surprised herself. "She has made the *spirit-raps* tell nothing my own mind might not have guessed," thought the young lady; "Captain Gardner is the only gentleman staying here, and he is always seen with me; the spirit's made a clever hit, that's all."

And a sarcastic smile played round her mouth, as these thoughts flitted through her brain, while she scarcely could refrain from an involuntary burst of laughter, as her eye rested on Mrs. Fosterton's beautiful face, who sat with the pupils of her eyes distended, almost unconscious, in a state approaching catalepsy.

"Spirits," demanded the *medium*, in a low, sepulchral tone, while her lustrous eyes seemed to seek some tangible object in the darkened space on which she gazed so intently, "Is it the soulless that has died by the hand of Alfred Gardner?"

No rap was heard in reply, but an exclamation of terror burst from the blanched lips of Mrs. Fosterton. Miss Mellworth looked unmoved, there was something approaching a sneer about the corners of her mouth.

"A man?" asked the *medium*, in the same tone of voice she had put the former question.

A distinct rap was heard on the table, so loud, and apparently so near Miss Mellworth's hands, that she involuntarily withdrew them, to see was there any hard substance near where they had been placed.

"An equal in birth and station?" was the next interrogatory put by the *medium*, in the same deep, mysterious tone of voice.

And three loud and separate raps were heard on the table.

The *medium* drew a sheet of paper near Mrs. Fosterton, and placed a pencil between the fingers of her right hand, and, as if unconscious, she wrote on the paper before her "Charles Stamer."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Miss Mellworth, and the *séance* was broken up.

CHAPTER XXV.

And how, and why, we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renewed, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind.

THAT morning, when Julia Mellworth left the General's dressing-room, low and depressed in spirits, she preferred a quiet walk in the pleasure grounds by herself, to seeking out Mrs. Fosterton, and accompanying that lady in a drive, as suggested by the gouty General: and now, with her shawl wrapt tightly around her fragile and graceful figure, chill and dispirited, the disappointed girl wended her way towards a piece of sunny *pleasance*, at some distance from the house, shut in by thick plantations, and sufficiently secluded to suit her present frame of mind. The day was dark and sullen-looking, with but little sun, and scarcely any breeze in the sheltered path she had chosen. Slowly, and dejectedly, Julia walked along, with sad and embittered thoughts busy at her heart. Charles Stamer had interested her girlish feelings before she was brought out into the *grande monde*, and the heartlessness a young sensitive nature, such as hers, singularly truthful and straightforward, early perceived in her fashionable, gifted sister, and gay, professing friends, only drew the cord that bound her to the open, single-minded boy lover closer by the contrast. Julia was not yet nineteen, and her affianced husband scarcely two and twenty, but their respective fathers had agreed, that without any formal engagement, the young people might be united, when the gentleman attained his twenty-fourth birthday, and his bride her majority.

Julia had no mother, she lost that first and best friend some years before, and though she and her sister were never separated, there existed little or no sympathy between them. Her father was selfish in his nature, and positive in his disposition ; and Julia, who was neither, would have loved him dearly, if he only would have allowed her ; but the old General treated his sensible and affectionate daughter as if she were still a child, incapable of judging rightly, even in trivial matters, and her society was only appreciated and valued when he was laid-up a prisoner with the gout. So that a warm loving heart, whose gushing sympathies had been repulsed and driven back from flowing in the channel nature provided for those early clinging affections, that in after years, like the Savoyard's mountain home, is the "green spot in memory's waste," was denied to Julia Mellworth, and Charles Stamer became associated in her mind as parent—sister—lover—one whose kindness she could always rely on ; whose judgment was to guide, and whose love was to cherish her through life.

His late estrangement, then, was like no common love-quarrel, when the fickle god shakes his wing, as if for temporary flight, but a source of anguish and sorrow Julia had never previously experienced ; it never had occurred to her before, the remotest possibility of Charles Stamer ceasing to love her ; and she now connected his late cold absent manner with the cursory, yet pointed remarks, thrown out, from time to time, by Captain Gardner, of the fickleness of very young men's affections, and their generally loathing ties, formed in boyhood, when they afterwards looked abroad on the world, and met women capable of inspiring them with a real and lasting passion.

Then he would dwell on "the dull tame insipidity of an union contracted before either of the parties had fathomed the depth of their own hearts, or had acquired that knowledge of life and of each other, so necessary to guide them in a choice that must be for weal or woe ;" and in Captain Gardner's opinion generally the latter, for

“the girl that would fascinate a man at twenty, would be found the reverse of the picture his disciplined taste would fix on, as necessary to secure his future happiness, five years after.”

Another cheek, beside Julia Mellworth's, grew pale, when those remarks were made, for they tore away the frail link that bound Frank Lee's soul to Mary Elmore.

His own heart flattered them as true; and in giving way to the most enthusiastic and fervent admiration for another, he felt Captain Gardner was right, and almost loathed the tie that still bound him.

He never stopped to investigate his feelings, or to restrain them; but adopting the Captain's philosophy, persuaded himself he did not differ from others, and that the spirit of change coming over his heart, was a mere necessary consequence of enlarged views, and of experiencing the ecstatic pleasure of daily seeing and conversing with a being whose inspiration drew forth feelings and ideas he never before could realise.

His cheek blanched, then, to hear another advocate the stifled whisperings of his own soul, as something like terror swept across his vision of Mary Elmore's future. For his own, he trembled, too; but the absorbing feeling of his mind was delight.

Not so, poor Julia, she had an instinctive dread of Captain Gardner: and whenever he reasoned and philosophised against early attachments, he seemed the sexton who rang the knell of her own and Charles Stamer's happiness; for though she did not for a moment doubt the power of Captain Gardner to separate them for ever, still she had no real misgiving that her lover was estranged, from any newly awakened passion for another; for the uprightness of his principles, and the steadfast attachment he had evinced towards herself, though both had been subject to the ordeal of a London season, forbade such a fear. But he seemed so mysteriously controlled by Captain Gardner, on many occasions, was so much under the influence of his opinion, even in trivial matters, that she invariably shuddered, whenever she

heard one, whom she alike feared and disliked, advocate sentiments that seemed but as the coming shadow of her own fate.

And when she saw this dangerous man go forth that morning alone with her lover, except the two game-keepers, who of course would not be in their immediate company, she felt nearly certain that a crisis in her destiny was approaching, and her sinking spirit whispered—despair. She felt so powerless to oppose successfully the machinations of a man who seemed to succeed with everybody he wished ; already his opinions ruled alike her lover and sister, nor did she doubt their potency with her father, if Captain Gardner thought it necessary to conciliate and persuade the old General into the adoption of his own views.

“What is it makes this man so powerful?” asked Julia of herself, as she slowly paced a secluded walk. “Charles Stamer, when he is present, never expresses an opinion without first seeking to obtain his, or if he does, that bright cutting eye of this dangerous, mysterious man, as cold and as glittering as steel, is fixed upon him with such a look ! How Charles submits to it, I cannot imagine ; he that is so sensible, so investigating, so self-relying in general. Well, perhaps after all, he went to Mr. Warner’s to escape being subject to that sort of thing ; latterly I have seen him wince under those glances, and Charles looks so determined, when he makes up his mind about anything.”

And a smile passed over the fair Julia’s sad face, as she thought of her lover’s look of defiance at Captain Gardner, the night he had returned from dining at Wellmine, a sort of answering glance to the Captain’s sneer of displeasure, when he heard Mr. Warner’s name mentioned.

“I was in hopes,” mused she, “that he was going to shake off this mysterious sort of authority, he exercises over him, but now to day, Laura says, it was a command, from this overbearing man, that brought him back, to go out cock-shooting with him. What infatua-

tion can he have?" again demanded Julia's heart, "over a mind as resolute and as independent as Charles Stamer's? I can account," pursued she, "for his influence over Mr. and Mrs. Fosterton; he is in the Life Guards, and all that, and has the *entrée* to some of the most *recherché* people in London, and has a clever way of persuading one to adopt any fashionable absurdity he may take up; can talk of his friend the Duchess of this, and the Countess of that, whose Puseyite Chapel he helped to design; has a rosary, or a picture, that nobody else ever saw, but is quite at their service—their discriminating love for *vertù* can best appreciate it; and thus he goes on, flattering and fooling, until Mr. Fosterton is persuaded he has, from his love of art, a peculiar turn for the religion of the middle ages; and Mrs. Fosterton, and that poor inexperienced young Curate, are like people exorcised by some spell, acting as if in a dream, with reason asleep, and imagination their only guide. Then Laura"——

Here Julia's thoughts came to a sudden stop, for she knew her sister too well to suppose that she had been bewitched by anything but the sorcery of a good position in society, a large fortune, and the *prestige* a fascinating, ready witted man enjoyed, in certain fashionable circles.

"Lady Drydale was right," said Julia, half aloud, "to warn me that this man was dangerous, and insinuating, but her ladyship was wrong in supposing he had no fixed principles, for he has," thought the reflecting girl, "and bad ones, too."

Here her thoughts took another turn, and the same vague feeling of danger to her lover, that she had felt in seeing him and Captain Gardner together, equipped for a shooting excursion, an hour or so before, came back to her mind, with renewed force, and a feeling of apprehension, also amounting to a *presentiment*, paled and flushed her cheek alternately; and with an undefined purpose to engage the old steward's services in some way, so as to interrupt the quarrel she feared would take place between the two sportsmen who had so much occu-

pied her thoughts, she quickened her pace, to reach Mat Carey, whom she had perceived at a distance, superintending an under gardener, removing to their winter quarters beds of exotics, in the well sheltered pleasure ground, the walk she was in, overlooked.

"Good morning, Mr. Carey," said the young lady, in a hurried voice, as she approached where the old steward was stooping over some choice green-house plants, and lecturing his companion for not having them housed before the slight hoar frosts had damaged their good looks.

"Good morning, ma'am," replied Mr. Mat Carey, in a courteous tone, raising himself from his stooping posture, and respectfully moving his hat, evidently surprised, yet well pleased, at the lady's recognition. But the old steward had been pointed out to Julia, by Charles Stamer, as an ancient ally of his, when a boy, and she had heard him so often spoken of, as a sort of heir loom, by the Fostertons, and his many eccentric, but estimable qualities canvassed, that she now addressed him, for the first time, as an acquaintance, of long standing.

With a woman's ingenious adaptation of circumstances, to break in on the *tete a tete* she so much dreaded, Julia bethought of having perceived her favourite little dog, that under Charles Stamer's tuition had become an experienced cocker, in his company that morning, as he crossed the lawn, on his way to the wood, and now asking Mr. Carey, in as careless a tone as she could assume, "Had he seen her dog?" commenced the conversation.

The observant old man was well acquainted with the appearance of the diminutive little setter, Miss Julia Mellworth's dog, who was a favourite companion of Mr. Stamer's, in his early walk every morning, and his constant attendant when he went to the wood, looking for cock; so that the relative position of the parties was no secret from the sagacious steward, and he answered now in a dry tone, not devoid of some humour—

"If your dog, ma'am, is a black tan, not much larger

than a King Charles, he's sure to be with Mr. Stamer, in the wood. Dogs, Madam, like other people, keep close to those that's fond of them."

And Mr. Carey, old bachelor as he was, stole a look into the fair face of Miss Julia Mellworth, to ascertain for himself, if the servants' hall report was correct.

The young lady felt her cheek slightly color, and, half provoked, she said quickly—

"I'm sure it's the same, those kind of dogs delight in rambling after whoever has a gun; but I don't wish Spree to spend to-day in the wood, and I should be so much obliged, if you would just go up there, Mr. Carey, and bring him here to me; I shall remain walking about until you return. Call him 'Spree, Spree,' and he will come to you at once; and you can tell the gentlemen, if they ask about your calling him, 'that he's wanted very badly;' but," added Julia, recollecting the real object she had in view, "be sure you speak to them first, before you bring Spree away."

The old man gave a searching glance at the fair speaker, to discover the hidden meaning of this errand for the re-capture of "Spree;" but there was something so earnest, so preoccupied in the expression of the young lady's face, that he felt nearly certain something more important than her dog's recall was uppermost in her thoughts.

"Oh! I shall bring him soon back to you, ma'am; I'll be able to get up to the wood by a short cut through the plantation yonder; but I didn't hear them fire a shot to-day, ma'am; what can they be about, I wonder? for the same frost that nipped the geraniums drove the cock into cover, and there's plenty of them to shoot any way, ma'am, for Mr. Fosterton seldom disturbs them."

And the old Steward gave a kind of half sigh at his master's want of taste in field sports.

"They are talking, not shooting," thought Julia—"perhaps quarrelling," suggested her fears, remembering the hostile looks that had passed, lately, between the parties, and, with some trepidation of manner, she cried out—

"For goodness sake, Mr. Carey, do not delay over those geraniums," as the old Steward was about finishing the removal of a favorite plant he had been busied about, when interrupted; "those things will wait, but I can't wait for my dog; I cannot tell you how much I want him; do go at once, Mr. Carey, if you please, and the gardener here will look to the plants you are anxious about; I would take them up myself, sooner than you should delay going for Spree, the gentlemen may have left the wood before you reach there, unless you hurry off at once."

And thus urged, Mr. Carey set off with "never fear, ma'am, I'm not a bad walker on a pinch."

And Mat muttered to himself, as he went along at a brisk pace—

"She's a mighty *purty* creature, but she's a terrible impatient lady; she don't want the little dog at all, but she wants me to see her *deary*, what he and that deep fellow that set the master so agog about this new fangled chapel, is about; and well she may, if she knew as much as I do of his doings with Sir Anthony, above there, at Croxley Abbey, where he and the Priests, I'm told, are as thick as hand and glove."

And Mr. Carey took what he called a "crow's flight" path towards the wood, on a lady's mission, that he muttered as he went along, "there was more in, than was intended for Mat Carey's ear;" while the fair Julia, much relieved by the expedient she had hit on, rambled through the extensive pleasure-grounds, to wile away time until the return of her messenger, persuading herself that Mr. Carey's interruption would prove a timely one, as sure to excite Charles Stamer's curiosity as to her object in sending for the dog, and so withdraw his thoughts from any unpleasantness that might have arisen between him and his companion; then her mind had been so restless since she had seen them going out to shoot that morning, that any person reporting to her that they had seen Charles Stamer, with no visible cause for alarm, would, in itself, be a relief.

Scarcely a half hour had elapsed since the old Steward set off for the wood, when the loud, sharp report of a discharged gun, not far distant, rang in Julia's ear ; she started, and stood still, as if waiting for a second to follow, but heard only the beatings of her own heart.

"What makes me so silly and nervous to-day?" she asked herself ; "I, who never give way to superstitious fancies ; I think Mrs. Fosterton must have infected me with her love of the marvellous ; but I must fight against it, or must soon believe, as she does, in 'spirit rapping,' as well as 'spirit warning.' He is in God's hands," thought she ; "His eye watches over His creatures, when no other eye sees their danger." And a silent and fervent prayer arose from the heart of this young attached girl, for the safety of one so inexpressibly dear. Calmed by the very effort to submit all her care to Him who seemed as a strong tower of defence against the secret and machiavel arts of one she believed to be a wily, bad man, Julia resumed her walk, taking care, however, to keep in view of the path she expected the Steward to return by, and insensibly lessening the distance between where she walked and the wood, by choosing for her promenade the nearest point of the pleasure-ground that stretched in that direction.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Their senses men will trust ; we can't impose ;
 Or, if we could, is imposition right ?
 Own honey sweet, but owning, add this sting ;
 When mix'd with poison, it is deadly too ;
 Truth never was indebted to a lie.

Canst thou descend from converse with the skies,
 And seize thy brothers throat ? For what ?

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

WHEN Charles Stamer returned that morning to Fosterton Park, from the glebe of Mr. Warner, where he had been staying for some days before, it was in consequence of a pressing, almost peremptory request from Captain Gardner, the evening previous, to join him, the following morning, in a *battue* against a fabulous number of cock, in a wood that immediately joined the demesne of Fosterton.

"I did not intend to see Julia until after lunch hour, when everybody would be dispersed," mused he, as he held the open note in his hand, and looked out of the drawing-room window at Wellmine, fixing his eyes on Captain Gardner's groom, who was ordered to wait for an answer ; "but I will return to Fosterton earlier, and indulge this gentleman with a morning's sport, as he seems to wish for it so much, though the game, I promise him, will not be bagged so soon as he thinks ; he will find a stag at bay," thought he, and an expression, half stern, half sarcastic, flitted across the manly countenance, whose usual expression was light-hearted cheerfulness. "But it's all for the better," thought he again, as he

folded his note, and directed it to 'Captain Gardner,' "the explanation should come sooner or later, and when once given to him, I'm done with scheming Jesuits for ever; and a load of hateful duplicity is taken off my heart, and my poor little Julia must hear all, when I am done with this double faced Captain; but I'm sure she must have thought me so strange, and so unkind, in shunning her, as I have done; but my mind was in such a tumult of doubt, I did not like to worry her; but now it is fully made up." And Charles Stamer applied his signet ring, with a firm hand, on the softened wax of his note seal, and handed it to the attendant servant, for "Captain Gardner's groom," and with a cleared brow joined the social circle round Mrs. Stanley's work table, and discussed plans with her and Mr. Warner, for the remainder of the evening, relative to house accommodation for the labouring poor, on his father and uncle's estates, as if the horrors of the Confessional did not await him the next morning.

After family prayer had concluded, he bade his friends good bye, as he was to leave at an early hour, and when about retiring, while he warmly returned Mr. Warner's affectionate pressure of his hand, he said with some emotion: "How shall I ever thank you, my dear Sir, for teaching me to read God's Word, and judging for myself? It has, indeed, made me free, for it has shewn me the sinful weakness of my own heart, and the blind sophistry of man, in trusting to created things, for the salvation of what is immortal."

Shall we follow Charles Stamer to his chamber that night, and observe his fine intelligent face, as it bent over, for many hours, God's message to finite man—the Bible. He seemed not to weary of comparing its great truths, but closed the book reluctantly, as his burnt out candle warned him to retire to rest, and with no witness but his God, this humble hearted, but noble minded young man, on bended knee, applied for that help at the Throne of Grace, he felt he so much needed, through the merits alone of his great Redeemer, committing his future course of life to His merciful guidance, and, like Jacob,

wrestling in prayer for a blessing on himself and his affianced wife, which was not denied. He rose up strong in faith, and refreshed in spirit, to calmly meet the future, and sank into unbroken rest, undisturbed by cunning devices and wily schemes, such as had haunted his pillow, when acting a double part, and rising early in the morning, he sought again in humble faith a blessing, and started for Fosterton Park; but Captain Gardner was not visible; and Charles Stamer, who felt the great turning point of his life approached, took out his bible, and prepared himself with its divine precepts and example, "to fight the good fight of faith," and encounter the bitter opposition of a man, whose spiritual power he had been taught heretofore to look upon as something omnipotent; and, like an enfranchised Helot, who had burst the fetter's chain from long usage, its pressure would be felt round the weakened limb, so did young Stamer's mind, in some degree, vibrate to the enslaving power of the Jesuit, Father Peter; and it was not without some embarrassment he returned Captain Gardner's gay salutation from the breakfast table, as he entered the morning room at Fosterton, and could not shake off the grave reserve of his manner, while the other laughed and jested about his friend's late *retraite* amongst the Puritans, and his own good nature in exorcising him thence for a capital day's sport.

Mr. Fosterton seldom went out to shoot, and, when he did, cared little for so robust an amusement, and this day he was specially engaged to meet Sir Anthony Reynard, who was to inspect some pictures that had just arrived from London, and pronounce on the authenticity of Murillo's that had been manufactured by Jew artists, but sold as "the genuine article," at "first-class price," to the "second-class" taste of Mr. Fosterton.

Before breakfast was discussed, Charles Stamer recovered, in some degree, his wonted cheerfulness of manner, and the Captain's easy, *déagagé* style of discoursing, as he lightly skimmed over different subjects, piqued, as well as reassured him, to break at once, and

for ever, with this masked Jesuit, who swept away, apparently by the mere force of his own will, and, as a matter of course, every obstacle that might arise to interfere with his slightest wish in accomplishing an object; and now, as he gaily chatted away with Miss Mellworth, and replied to Mr. Fosterton's learned disquisition on "*raredos*" and *sedilia*, on an altar "elevated on five steps," as indubitably necessary to the pomp and mystery of acceptable worship, his late pupil, fully awakened by the voice of truth, notwithstanding the force of early impressions, regarded his former confessor with a lofty contempt, he veiled under an air of indifference, as he addressed to the new chaplain, his old classfellow of other days, some common-place observation, apparently regardless of the subject under discussion, and was the first to rise from the breakfast table, and remind Captain Gardner of his shooting engagement.

No one could have perceived much change of manner in either, as they walked towards the wood, followed by the gamekeepers and dogs. Julia Mellworth's little favourite had early welcomed her lover, and had sat at his feet whilst he read before breakfast. The little animal now kept close to his heels, and, as they approached a large ditch, with water in it, which separated the demesne grounds from the wood, Charles Stamer lifted "Spree" in his arms over the fence, and, before he let him down, he patted his little canine friend, and pulled his ears slightly, while he gazed with almost affection down on the pretty favourite of his own Julia, as he caressingly addressed her faithful dog. "Master Spree, who told you to watch for me this morning, and come out with me to-day? Eh, Sir?" and the young man pulled his ears, and fondled Spree, and buried his own face in the silken ears of Julia's pet, while he thought only of Julia herself.

"Put down that dog, Stamer," cried the Captain, with a slight touch of Father Peter's dictating tone in his voice. "Leave off fooling, like a boy; I want to talk to you on a subject of great importance to yourself, before

you leave. For this purpose I came out to-day ; we can send the keepers to beat the upper wood ;" and, without waiting for a reply, the Captain called to one of the men, and gave his orders with a military precision of tone, that to Charles Stamer, with his present estimate of the Captain's character, was very amusing.

He gently let down "Spree" from his arms, and, taking his gun from the keeper, walked silently beside his former Father Confessor until the men were out of hearing, then, stopping suddenly, he said in a quiet tone of voice, while his companion charged his gun, "Captain Gardner, you say you came out on purpose to-day to speak to me on matters of importance ; let us discuss those matters before we proceed in the day's sport."

The Captain looked up from adjusting the caps on his gun, into Charles Stamer's face ; he did not look surprised at what he saw there, but he felt so. "We are quite alone, I believe," he replied, gravely, "but still, let us move further down into the wood."

Charles Stamer made no reply, but followed ; the Captain drew up near a mossy bank, at the foot of an oak, and resting his gun against another tree, deliberately sat down, while he remarked, in a cold tone, "there was room enough for two."

But Charles Stamer stood unmoved before him, resting on his gun.

"I wished to speak to you, my dear friend," began the Captain, in one of Father Peter's most soothing tones, "relative to a communication I have received from your excellent mother."

The young man slightly winced, but his companion, without taking seemingly any notice, went on.

"She, a true pious Catholic, is naturally more anxious about your serving faithfully the one true infallible Church, than she is about the fleeting considerations of your enjoying what may work out for your soul eternal woe."

The young man made no reply, save an acquiescent nod, and the Jesuit Father, after a pause, resumed.

"Your devoted mother long since prognosticated what I have lately perceived with much pleasure, that what you fancied, as a boy, necessary to your happiness, your manly good sense nauseates; in fact, you now see, as I and others do, you would be throwing yourself away to wed vapid insipidity with a taste that can appreciate gifted excellence in woman."

"Pray, explain yourself, Captain Gardner," said Charles Stamer, in a dry, quiet tone.

"It is scarcely necessary," replied the Captain; "your own heart can best explain, that the kite we fly in childhood is only waste paper in maturer years, the boy's imagination guides a mental kite, as well as his hand does a paper one. Such developed intellect as yours, my son, does not require my lenses to discover the flimsy material your mental kite was composed of; enough, that your Catholic mother rejoices you have made the discovery, as do I, the spiritual guide your Holy mother, the Church, has appointed to watch over you."

A flush like crimson passed over the brow of Charles Stamer, in a moment it subsided, and he then spoke in the same dry tone, coolly observing, "You are still enigmatical, Captain Gardner; pray, explain what you wish to convey without any trope or figure."

"I am your spiritual director here," remarked the Jesuit, in a severe tone; "and it is irreverend in you, Sir, to address me in the language of that world I am obliged to conform to, in promoting the interest and glory of that true infallible Church, of which I am a priest by Divine ordination."

"You must excuse my addressing you by your *nom de guerre*," observed Charles Stamer, whilst a slight curl of his expressive lip added point to the sarcasm.

"Do you dare insult a Catholic priest, Sir?" demanded Father Peter, in a tone meant to quell any incipient rebellion in his companion. "Do you dare condemn the authority of that Church who has power to bind or loose the souls of men as she pleases, in order to add to her own glory?"

"Let us understand one another, Captain Gardner," replied Charles Stamer coolly, "and it will save much painful recrimination on your part. I no longer believe in the tenets of that Church you call infallible, but which the Word of God has convinced me is that Apostate Church St. Paul warned Timothy of, 'whose consciences were seared with a hot iron,' 'speaking lies in hypocrisy.' I abjure all falsehood for the future, for the Scriptures tell me, 'the Devil is the father of lies;' and in renouncing lies, I separate myself irrevocably from a Church you nickname 'True;' for a false assumption of power is her foundation-stone, false doctrine her creed, when she sets up idols, and the inventions of man God has cursed; and false miracles are her mission, to impose on the weak, the ignorant, the superstitious, and the credulous. Clothe her in pomp and mystery as you will, she is no more a true Apostolic Church, than you, Reverend Sir, are a genuine loyal soldier to your Queen, though you assume the title and position of an officer of her Life Guards. That religion must be false," he added, with some vehemence of manner, "that requires 'lies spoken in hypocrisy,' to extend its influence, and bring men within its pale. It was not so, the apostles and early disciples converted heathens to the religion of Christ; they used no deception, but spoke 'the truth in sincerity.'"

"And what religion, may I ask, have you decided on, young Sir, after this tirade of blasphemy?" demanded Father Peter with a sneer. "The Calvinistic heresy, I should think, is most congenial to such a flight of impious sacrilege."

"I have been educated outwardly," replied the young man, in a tone of earnest dignity, "in that Church that holds the Scriptures of Truth to be the foundation of all truth; but I am now a sincere believer in her doctrines, for they are in accordance with the Word of God, and that Word I have searched diligently, and will search, with His blessing who told them who doubted, 'Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.'"

"You are a profane and audacious heretic," cried the Reverend Father, indignantly, "to set up your schoolboy judgment, cogging, with that old Puritan Warner, half-a-dozen texts out of a heretic Bible, against the Saints' and Martyrs' testimony of that infallible Church, whereof Christ gave the keys to Peter, when he said, 'On this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"

"Yes," replied Charles Stamer, in a firm, quiet tone, "on the 'Rock of Ages' the confession Peter had just made, 'thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,' drew forth from our Lord the sentence you have just quoted, that confession was the 'Rock of Salvation,' not Peter, for the Scriptures leave no doubt on the subject; they clearly declare, 'the Church of Christ is built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ himself being the Chief Corner Stone.'"

"Beware, young man," cried the astonished Father Confessor, in a warning tone, "of adopting such blasphemous heresy; remember, when you doubt the authority of Peter, as the Head of the Church, you commit mortal sin, for you doubt the authority of his successor, the Pope of Rome, who sits in his Apostolic chair, and holds the keys of Heaven."

"Peter styles himself," answered Charles Stamer, quickly, "'a Servant, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ,' and an 'Elder,' but he warns the rulers of the Churches against the sin of desiring to be 'Lords over God's heritage;'" and St. Paul claims equality with Peter, and the other Apostles, when he declares he was not 'a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles;'" and our Lord himself taught this doctrine to Peter, and the rest of his disciples, that you call 'blasphemous heresy,' when he said, 'Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren;'" while I challenge you from Scripture, to prove Peter ever took precedence of any of the Apostles, and, from Scripture and History, that he ever set his foot in Rome: so those fabulous keys the Pope claims the charge of, could never have been re-

ceived in succession from Peter, the Apostle of the Circumcision."

"You are eternally lost, young man," cried his late Confessor, "unless the power of that Church you have dared to outrage can assoil your soul from mortal sin. Well is it for the erring child, that his Catholic mother's prayers, and good works, plead before the Queen of Heaven for her fallen son, or he was for ever shut out of the pale of that true and holy Church, wherein alone can be found salvation."

"Captain Gardner," replied young Stamer, in a firm, composed tone, "denunciation is not argument—my challenge you have not answered. When I deny the authority of the Church of Rome, I deny her false doctrines, as contrary to the Word of God. The faith I shall live and die in," he added, with solemn earnestness, "is that of a guilty sinner, pardoned by the atoning blood of Christ, renewed by his Holy Spirit from dead works, to serve the living God."

"Then be accursed!" cried the Jesuit Father: "but no!" he added, standing up, and stretching forth his hand towards the young man, "such as you are never lost, with the Church's prayers offered up, along with your pious mother's, before the holy shrines of Saints and Martyrs, to keep her son in the one true faith. This is only a delusion of Satan's—he has gained power over you, who can transform himself into an Angel of Light: give not way to his temptations, but return to the duties you have for some time neglected, and, with penance and sorrow, remember the neglect of such sacred duties as confession and communion, have brought on you this judgment of unbelief. Come with me, then, this evening, to Croxley Abbey, and there, before the immaculate Mother of Heaven's shrine, think of your own mother's anguish, had she heard you utter words of sacrilege and impiety, and on bended knee, in the Confessional, lay bare the cruel snare of hell that has disturbed your Catholic spirit, and receive that plenary absolution from me, our Holy mother, the Church, bestows on her erring

children, who return into the one true fold, where safety alone—”

“Captain Gardner,” interrupted Charles Stamer, while his manly features wore a look of lofty indignation, “I am no longer a puppet in your hands, to be wheedled back to errors my soul renounces, to walk through the door of the Confessional, into the same tangled crooked path of deceit, my misguided parent, under the direction of the Church of Rome, plunged her son in, before he could judge rightly, the falsehood and meanness of deceiving the best and noblest of fathers. I acquiesced in your expressed wish, for this interview, Captain Gardner,” he added, somewhat haughtily, “merely to decline for the future your interference in either my spiritual or temporal concerns, and to state, calmly and distinctly, my present fixed religious opinions, which preclude the possibility of your ever again being received on habits of intimacy in my family, or visiting for the future at Stamer Castle.”

For the first time during the interview, the color varied on the marble-looking cheek of Captain Gardner: a bright hectic flushed his face for an instant, leaving it an ashen, leaden color, as if, by some revulsion, all blood had been suddenly expelled from the surface, while he said, almost between his closed teeth—

“You do well, Sir, to insult me; but it’s not with impunity; the eyes of General Mellworth, and his eldest daughter, shall be opened, as to the true character of the vacillating fool who tries to enter their family. The silly Julia must be saved against her own will, and a mother’s curse awaits the perverted son, were he impious enough to expose the sacred mysteries of her Catholic faith to the sneer of Puritanical heretics.”

“Malice and falsehood, when exposed, become scathless,” coolly observed Charles Stamer, as he turned on his heel, placing his gun on his shoulder, and walking leisurely away, retracing the same path by which he had entered the wood.

For a moment his companion’s cold, flinty eye followed

his receding figure ; the same ashen hue was still on his cheek and lips, giving an almost ghastly character to the countenance, from the painful contrast with the dark, fixed glare of eyes, more full of sorrow than of hate.

Did the Jesuit act from impulse, at that moment?—No; the Father Confessor knew his former penitent's inflexible and investigating nature too well to hope the time would come for him to recant. The last words he had uttered swept away any doubt of his exposing those secret means resorted to by an infallible Church, in her wisdom, but denounced by her opponents as unjustifiable, to accomplish her own holy ends. He had sworn the oath of Loyola, to serve Mother Church, at the sacrifice of every human tie, and the high-minded young man before him, whose secret thoughts were laid bare so often to his ear, in the Confessional, exciting within his confessor feelings of admiration and respect, must now die by his hand, a sacrifice to that stupendous superstition the Jesuit must uphold, even by the act of self-immolation.

The devoted servant of this cruel and remorseless creed and order, with a shudder now raised his gun, but the feeling was not excited by the abhorrent act he was about to commit, but at his own reluctance to be the executioner of the young, noble-hearted fellow he had known from a boy. Inwardly calling on the Blessed Virgin for strength to serve, without shrinking, the cause of Mother Church, he took, with the practised eye of a good marksman, deliberate aim at the head of his victim, who was still within a few paces, and with a steady hand laid his finger on the trigger.

Captain Gardner's gun never hung fire nor missed its object ; but its barrel was now beat down by a stout oaken stick, in the sturdy hand of Mat Carey, while he wildly cried out, as the gun exploded with a startling report—

“ You have shot Mr. Stamer dead, and done it on purpose ! ”



